Abdul Ghaffar Khan

faith is a battle

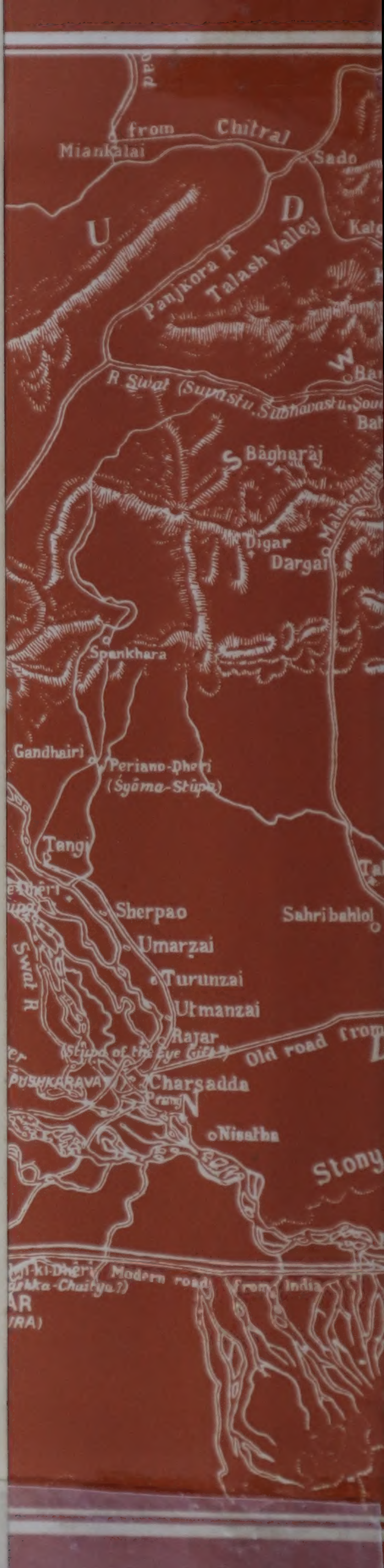


D. G. Tendulkar

The life of Abdul Ghaffar Khan is an inspiring saga, a triumph of spirit which knows nothing of force, whose conquests are won by the power of invincible gentleness. Mahatma Gandhi described him as a man of God. One of the greatest leaders of Asia, he was a close colleague of Gandhi and passionate fighter for freedom. His contribution towards the emancipation of India is immeasurable. Here is a stirring and authentic account of the indomitable spirit of the Pathans and their unique leader.

In the preparation of this biography, the author of eight volumes of *Mahatma* – a work, which in the words of *The Times Literary Supplement*, will never be surpassed as a thesaurus of Gandhi's vast activities – was fortunate in having active co-operation of Badshah Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru. Not easily available elsewhere, the material published here for the first time is the result of three years of intense research. The book presents a vivid account of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's life and work in Pakistan also. This book can truly be described as the ninth volume of *Mahatma*, embellished with many rare illustrations.

Rupees Sixty




MANGLAUR
(MANGALAPURA)
Mingaur
Udigram
Uch
Adinzai Valley
Barikot
Lundakai Pass
Thâna
Top-Darra
Chakdarra
Aladand
Mt. Ilam
Mt. Dosiri
B U N E R
Jaffer Hill
Tursak
Masuru Sanghârâma?
Sivika Stupa
Palai
Kol
Nafhu
Sanghao
Miyan-Khân
Babuzai
Pirzai
Sunigrâm
Mahovana-Sanghârâma?
Barandu R
Valley of Chamla
Mata
Palô-Dhêri
Tarêli
Sikri
Sawal-Dhêr
Jamâl-Garhi
Bakshali
Rustam
Machai
Bhimadevi-parvata
Mt. Karamar
Viśvantara-parvata
Shahbaz-Garhi
PO-LO-SHA
(VARSHA-PURA?)
Shiva
Naogram
Narinji
Rânigat
Mt. Mahâban
Hoti
Mardân
G A N D H Â R A
Palosdarra
Swabi
Asgram
Maira
desert called
Zeida
Lahoro
(Śalatura)
Und (UDABHANDA)
R. Indus (Sindhu)
H A Z Â R A
Plain of Chach
(Śuksha)
To Taxila
Khairabad
Attock
To Rawal

Abdul Ghaffar Khan

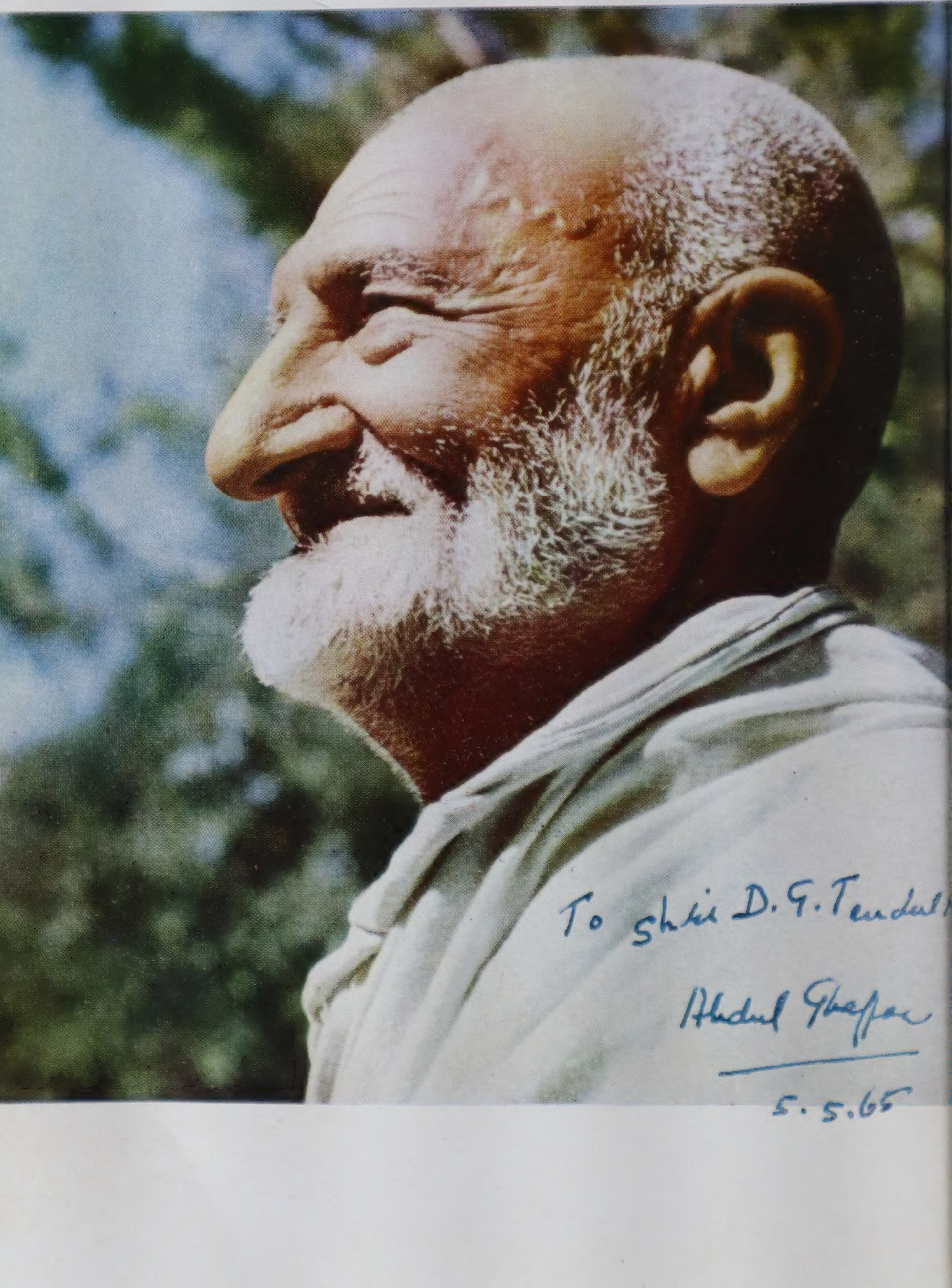
faith is a battle

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by G. R. Bhatkal
Popular Prakashan
35c Tardeo Road, Bombay 34, India

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To Shri D. G. Tendul
Abdul Ghaffar
5.5.65

Abdul Ghaffar Khan

faith is a battle

D. G. Tendulkar

Published for
GANDHI PEACE FOUNDATION
by
POPULAR PRAKASHAN, BOMBAY

राष्ट्रपति भवन, नई दिल्ली-4
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN,
NEW DELHI-4.

June 15, 1967.

I am very glad that my friend, Shri D.G. Tendulkar, has prepared an authentic biography of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The name of Shri Tendulkar, by his monumental work on the life of Mahatma Gandhi, has become a legend, and one can, therefore, be sure that apart from its undisputed origin, this new book would be of great literary value.

Badshah Khan, as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is affectionately called, epitomizes all that is great and good in human endeavour. Whilst we of his generation who had the good fortune of working under his leadership, knew the life of service and sacrifice that he lived, this book of Shri Tendulkar will tell those of the younger generation and posterity that there once was a man of the stature and calibre of Badshah Khan who lived and sacrificed his all for the sake of what he believed to be right.

I hope Shri Tendulkar's book will be widely read.

Zakir Husain

प्रधान मंत्री भवन
PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

FOREWORD

It is not mere coincidence that D.G. Tendulkar should have followed his eight-volume monumental work on the life of Gandhiji by a biography of Badshah Khan. The life story of one forms a natural complement to the life story of the other. The two together illumined the path traversed by the generation to which I belong.

The history of the human race is the history of the martyrdom of man: Centuries often pass by during which the human spirit lies stifled and dormant. Then, suddenly a man arises giving voice to the muted turbulence of the human spirit. Gandhiji was such a man. Badshah Khan is another. And he still walks this earth, beckoning us to remain true to our heritage.

Many miracles were wrought in the Gandhian era but none was more dramatic than the conversion of the fiery Pakhtoons into the Khudai Khidmatgars and the acceptance by a martial people of the higher law of non-violent self-sacrifice in defence of the dignity of man. Tendulkar describes this drama in all its intensity.

As one reads through the pages of Tendulkar's book, one is overcome by a feeling of shame. One can only hope that Badshah Khan in his compassion will forgive us our failures.

Indira Gandhi

(Indira Gandhi)

New Delhi
June 21, 1967.

Publisher's Note

As one thinks of the epic struggle of India for freedom, the name of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan comes very prominently to our mind. He has been one of the closest associates of Gandhiji, so much so that he came to be called the Frontier Gandhi. As I write, the majestic figure of the leader of Pathans and fighter for our freedom rises before me. His faith in satyagraha is unshaken, his hope in the victory of the righteous cause of Pakhtuns is undimmed.

The Gandhi Peace Foundation thought it a duty to pay its humble tribute to the hero of many struggles by bringing out a biography of this man of peace. When I placed this proposal before D. G. Tendulkar, he said, "If I write any other biography after the *Mahatma*, it would be of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan." A lot of material had to be collected from various sources and a messenger was specially sent to Kabul to Badshah Khan. The life story of this great man has developed in the hands of the biographer of Mahatma Gandhi into a saga — one of the most interesting and important biographies of our times.

I thank the author for not only agreeing to write this biography but for the deep love and understanding he has brought to bear on the subject. His devotion is remarkable. I thank Shri K. B. Narang for collecting material from archives and the Home Ministry for giving necessary permission and access to valuable historic records. The Times of India Press deserves our thanks for printing this book and Popular Prakashan of Bombay for being representatives.

This biography of a living champion of the birthright of a brave and noble people to autonomy is sure to inspire generations to come.

R. R. Diwakar
Gandhi Peace Foundation

New Delhi
May 5, 1967

Dear Mr. Tendulkar,

I am thankful for all your letters and the pains you are taking to write the history of our movement and myself.

The reason for my not writing to you so far was my ill health and various other preoccupations. I, however, apologize for this delay.

Shri Narang is coming to you with the background material I could remember. If you want to write something on my life in Pakistan prison, I would write it for you, a painful narrative though it would be. I will also be sending you a message for your book which you have asked for and anything else you require. Please do write to me then. I have, however, for certain reasons avoided to say anything about Pakhtunistan. I might do it after some time.

I am sending you my photograph duly signed as a mark of my affection and also a table cloth which a friend of mine brought the other day. I never accept presents, but I had to do it just for your sake.

With all best wishes and love

Kabul,
5-5-1965

Abdul Ghaffar

زه چه د اتو نهو کالو وم - او په پېښاور کښې په اسکول
کښې سبق وئ - نو اکثر به مې لوبې د بنګالیانو بچو سره کولې - زه به هغه خپلو
ملګیرو منع کوو لم - چه دا خو چیرې یان دی - ته دوئ سره ولې لوبې کوې
ولې زه به د صفوئی په سبب چیرو - نه منع کیدم - او نه به ځما یاران ددې
سره اکثر کیدو - چه زه لوئ هم شم - نو ځما اکثر تعلقات به قصبه خلقو سره وو
ځما دوستان اکثر - لوراران. جولاګان، ترکانان - شاخیلان وو. حالانکه
زه د خان زوئ وم -
زه چه هلک وم نو د قیصو اوریدو سره ډیر شوق وو - او د قیصو
باره کې زبانی او په کتابونو کښې خوښې وې - بیا زر زر مې طبیعت کښې تبدیلي راتله
او دا کتابونه مې باخوږ وو - چه هغه کیبا ددې خلقو حالات وو
چه ځای د انسانیت او د خدائ د مخلوق په لاره کښې ډیر ډیر تکلیفونه
او مصیبتونه تیر کړي وو فقط

عبدالغفار
5. 5. 65

Preface

It took me over a decade to prepare the eight volumes of *Mahatma*; the present volume on Abdul Ghaffar Khan kept me fully occupied for four years. Generally I do not like politicians, but I was drawn to this simple and indomitable Pathan. With me violence or non-violence is not a dogma. I admire Ho Chi Minh as much as I do Badshah Khan. It is the spirit behind a man's actions that attracts me.

Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan were greatly attracted towards each other. Although they were so different in their background and upbringing, they spoke the same language and reacted in the same way to similar situations. Badshah Khan is the idol of his people, but his popularity has never gone to his head. He shuns all power and pomp. His passion is freedom for the Pathans. He wants them to serve humanity and play an honourable role in Asian affairs. He detests slavery and his heart weeps at the sight of misery. If he has his way, he would efface tyranny and oppression from the earth. This is what Islam means to him. He is a great crusader.

It is an irony of fate that in freeing the subcontinent from foreign rule, Badshah Khan has been deprived of his own freedom. And his people, the proud Pakhtuns, have been denied the opportunity for all-round development. His and his people's unique contribution to the freedom fight is part of history.

It was Jawaharlal Nehru's last assignment to me to write a biography of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Having been party to partition, he felt a prick of conscience. Jawaharlal was eager that I should write on Badshah Khan. But he was much worried about the meagreness of the material available. To enable me to write the biography, he supplied me with relevant material in the possession of the External Affairs Ministry and the All-India Congress Committee office and even some minutes of the meetings of the Congress Working Committee. He was a great moral support to me and, in gratitude, I dedicate this book to his memory.

I have sincerely tried to write about Badshah Khan objectively. On the eve of the recent Indo-Pakistan conflict I wrote to President Ayub Khan requesting him to supply me with material on Badshah Khan. But I did not hear from him. I have tried my best to collect material

from every source and I am thankful to those who have directly or indirectly helped me in my difficult task.

I am thankful to R. R. Diwakar, who also suggested that I should undertake this work, as he had done earlier in regard to the seventy-fifth birthday volume and the detailed life of Gandhiji. As Chairman of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, and particularly as an old friend—a co-prisoner in the Nasik jail—he has tried to be helpful to me. Temperamentally, I am not made to execute assignments on behalf of any committee or foundation. Without his help I could not have pulled on with the Gandhi Peace Foundation.

In my research work I was fortunate to have the assistance of K. B. Narang, a dedicated Khudai Khidmatgar and erstwhile member of the N.-W. Frontier Province Assembly, who went through the records in the National Archives, New Delhi, and supplied me with valuable data. He also translated for me some of the writings and speeches of Badshah Khan published in *Pakhtun*. Some *Pakhtun* issues were obtained through the good offices of Badshah Khan from the Kabul Library. To Narang also goes the credit for taking down the dictation for a month from Badshah Khan in Kabul about some events in his life, particularly of the earlier period, narrated here for the first time. In fact Badshah Khan gave me a skeleton of the book. To him I am grateful for his gracious co-operation. His son, Ghani, has written a little classic, *The Pathans*, and I have freely used it.

Besides the National Archives, where the records on the national movement are available, I had access to two police files of the Home Department of the erstwhile Bombay Government, containing press cuttings on Badshah Khan. I must also express my gratitude to B. N. Phatak for his co-operation, to Baburao Patel and Sushila Rani for loan of press cuttings and to The Times of India Reference Section for allowing me to use their reference material and photographs for my book. I am indebted to P. K. Roy, Ramesh Sanzgiri, R. S. Kolatkar and others from The Times of India Press for their unfailing courtesy.

My thanks are due to the Asiatic Library and D. N. Marshall, the Librarian of the Bombay University Library, for lending me books freely.

I am grateful to Pyarelal, a member of the Publication Committee of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, for allowing me to use his articles and reports in *The Statesman*, *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and *Harijan*.

As in my earlier work, *Mahatma*, Anu Bandyopadhyaya has been my unfailing colleague in the preparation of the present volume. She has also translated into English some portions of Badshah Khan's reminiscences and his *Pakhtun* articles with the help of Narang and rendered

Pakhtu verses in English. She has also helped me in making the index.

My manuscript was read by D. S. Bakhle, D. G. Palekar, N. G. Jog, Anu Bandyopadhyaya, and I thank them for their suggestions. I am also thankful to Shamlal for reading through some of my chapters. While I am indebted to these friends for their suggestions, the responsibility for the present form of the book is mine.

I am grateful to Dr. Zakir Husain for revising the glossary and for rendering the Islamic terms in English, V. S. Bakhle for his expert advice on legal and cultural matters, Dr. N. B. Parulekar for his abiding interest in my research work and to Indira Gandhi, Nirmal Kumar Bose, Pulin Bihari Sen, Biswarup Bose, D. R. D. Wadia, P. N. Sharma, O. N. Varma, Ramabhadra Chari, Ranga Chari, P. K. Jain, Sadanand Bhatkal, Ramdas Bhatkal and V. R. Narayan. My thanks are also due to R. K. Karanjia for his help and his assistant P. S. Parasuraman for typing over a thousand pages of manuscript.

D. G. Tendulkar

Contents

List Of Illustrations

Endpapers *courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India*

Introductory

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as the Frontier Gandhi, was hailed by Mahatma Gandhi as "a man of God". "Having put his whole soul into his cause, he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to realize that there is no deliverance for the Pathan except through out-and-out acceptance of non-violence. He does not take pride in the fact that the Pathan is a fine fighter. He appreciates his bravery but he thinks that he has been spoilt by overpraise. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. And this he thinks can only be achieved through non-violence."

Straight in body and mind, sincere and simple, kindly and gentle, fearless, faithful and true, a towering personality with a friendly chiselled face, and a character built up in the fire of long suffering and painful ordeal, Abdul Ghaffar is one of the outstanding soldiers who have fought for the liberation of India from the foreign domination and exploitation. Over a dozen times he has been imprisoned, first by the British, and then by the Pakistanis. At the age of seventy-seven the determined soldier of peace and noble endeavour has to his credit thirty years of jail life in pursuit of high principles. He will not bend.

The earliest and the most outstanding instance of the triumph of the indomitable spirit of the Pathan is to be found in the encounter, on the plain of Taxila, between Alexander and the Indian sage, Dandamis, who, according to an ancient Greek chronicler, "though old and naked was the only antagonist in whom Alexander, the conqueror of many nations, had met his match." When the messengers from Alexander invited him to go to the son of Zeus, with promise of gifts if he complied, and threats of punishment if he refused, Dandamis, did not go. Alexander, he said, was not the son of Zeus, for he was not so much as master of the larger half of the world. As for himself, he wanted none of the gifts of a man whose desires nothing should satiate; and as for his threats he feared them not; for if he lived, India would supply him with food enough, and if he died, he would be delivered from irksome companionship of the body now afflicted with age, and would be translated to a better and a purer life.

This region, the Peshawar valley, known as Gandhara in ancient

times, where a naked hermit defied a mighty emperor, is the birthplace of Abdul Ghaffar. The term "Gandhara" is met for the first time in the Rigveda. There, as in the texts of Achaemenian, Hellenistic and Roman periods, it indicates a region on the north-western frontier of India. The people of this region were known as "Pakhta" in the Rigveda, or Pakhtun or Pathan as they are now called. The appellation Pathan is the Indian variant of Pukhtana, the plural of Pakhtun. There are two main variants of the language of the Pathans — the Pakhtu spoken by the north-eastern tribes, and the soft variant, Pashtu, spoken by those to the south-west. The geographical distribution of the two forms of the language has resulted in a Peshawar predilection for Pakhtu — in fact the city is known as Pekhawar.

The Pakhtuns are Aryans, and Pakhtu is an Indo-Iranian Aryan language, closely related to Sanskrit and Zend. It was not reduced to writing until the fifteenth century. It is written in the Persian script and is spoken by over ten million people in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. This language is the most obvious symbol today of Pakhtun identity and the measure of Pakhtun pride. It has a rich literature, the most widely known poets being Rehman Baba for mystic poems and Khushal Khatak for patriotic and love songs.

The North-West Frontier is hard to describe. No short stretch of this region is like its neighbour — no ground of the same nature for twenty miles on end. First, miles of cliff and stony slopes giving way to open fans of cultivation backed by sheer cliffs, narrow river gorges opening out to fir-covered mountains, which drop to swelling bush-covered hills or bare grazing-grounds with patches of forest; then open plains flanked by low, bare hills and scored by deep ravines. It is a tremendous scenic canvas against which the Pathan plays out his life, a canvas brought into vivid relief by sharp, cruel changes of climate. The weft and warp of this tapestry are woven into the souls and bodies of the men. Much is harsh, but all is drawn in strong tones that catch the breath.

The story of this borderland of India may well serve in many ways as the epitome of India's past history. Here was the meeting-place in the days of old of the three great cultures of Asia — the Indian, the Chinese and the Iranian. Here Greece met India in cultural fellowship and philosophical camaraderie. To its great university of Taxila came seekers after knowledge from many lands. Through that forbidding and yet inviting portal of India, the Khyber Pass, came many peoples and many races, bringing their distinctive contribution to India and yet ultimately merging themselves into the sea of Indian humanity. A centre of Indian culture for long centuries, this border country was so

well known throughout India that when brave expeditions went out from South India to colonize the islands of the eastern seas of South-East Asia, they took many a place name with them from the valley of the Kabul river.

The boundaries of the North-West Frontier country have changed from time to time. During the early Aryan period, they extended from the valley of the Indus to far-away Central Asia and included the major part of Afghanistan, the present North-West Frontier Province and the southern valley of the Indus in Sind and Baluchistan. From about the sixth century B.C. onward, that part of the country which is known as the North-West Frontier Province formed part of the Iranian, the Greek, the Kushan, the Gupta, the Turki, the Ghorian, the Mogul and the Duranni empires down to 1819. In 1849, after about twenty years of Sikh rule, the area now identifiable as the Settled Districts was taken over by the British. The modified frontier line, known as the Durand Line, was fixed in 1894, after the Afghan wars, along the crests of the Sulaiman Range of mountains, and brought the tribes living in the Khyber and Mohmands, Kurram and Waziristan, within the British sphere of influence. Thus the North-West Frontier Province came to have two boundaries: the international boundary, represented by the Durand Line which separated British India from Afghanistan, and the administrative boundary, demarcating the zone actually held by the British. The tract between these two, known as the Tribal Belt, constituted a no man's land. It was part of India on the map but not in fact. Its residents did not owe any direct allegiance to the British Crown or allow their lands to be annexed. Beyond the military roads, the tribesmen did what was right in their own eyes. They lived inside their fortified farmstead with their womenkind. They were not to be treated as British subjects but as British protected persons, independent as long as they remained passive but subject to "protection" as soon as they became active. The British claimed their right to bomb the tribesmen from the air for police purposes.

As at present constituted, the North-West Frontier Province is bounded on the north by the Hindukush Range, on the south by Baluchistan, on the east by Kashmir and the Punjab and on the west by Afghanistan. Its area is 38,000 square miles and the population is over five million people, an overwhelming majority of whom are Muslims. There was a minority of five per cent of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, but after partition of India it is almost nil. Its extreme length is 408 miles and extreme breadth 279 miles. Its territories fall into three geographical groups: the cis-Indus district of Hazara, the narrow strip between the Indus and the hills constituting the Settled trans-Indus

Districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Mardan and Dera Ismail Khan, and the rugged mountainous region between these districts and the borders of Afghanistan. Of this territory a little over one-third is covered by the six Settled Districts. The remaining two-thirds, or 25,000 square miles, are held by tribes of either the Tribal Belt or of the Independent Territory, who, for a century, resisted subjugation by the British. For administrative purposes, the latter area, before the partition, was divided into five Political Agencies: Malakand, Kurram, Khyber, North Waziristan and South Waziristan.

Much of the region is still virgin soil. It is rich in untapped mineral resources, the principal among them being rock-salt, oil, limestone, marble, sulphur, coal and tin. Some gold and iron too have been found. It has plenty of labour and an immense reservoir of water-power. It has two wet seasons and the rainfall averages twenty inches a year. The principal crops are maize, barley, wheat, rice, gram, sugar-cane, cotton and tobacco. Babur claimed that he was the first to introduce sugar-cane in Hashtanagar. The Peshawar valley is for the most part highly irrigated and well-wooded, presenting in spring and autumn a picture of waving corn fields and smiling orchards framed in rugged hills. Sheep and goats are bred in every district.

The majority of the people of the region are agriculturists. They generally eat *khichri*, a mixture of rice, pulse and vegetables. With *nan*, home-made wheaten bread, they love to eat meat when they can afford it. The Pathan is generally abstemious and, outside the towns, the use of opium and spirit is regarded as disreputable. Smoking and drinking of tea are universal. The dress of the peasant consists of a turban, a loose shirt or tunic, baggy trousers, and a chaddar or blanket wrapped round the waist or placed on the head as a protection against the sun. Women wear an upper garment forming a bodice and skirt in one piece. Underneath are worn baggy trousers, and above a shawl. Their hair is elaborately braided. Sandals of grass or leather are worn by both sexes. In the south the man's hair is generally allowed to grow long and sometimes to curl into ringlets. He wears a flower in his hair and puts collyrium in his eye. His lips are dyed red with walnut bark. He wears his rifle on his shoulder and carries his *sitar* in his hand. He never takes cover in a fight and always laughs and sings even when he is in peril. He lives an honest and primitive life in a lonely valley or a small village. The Pathan has a tender heart but tries to hide it under a rough exterior. In Peshawar the Pathan shaves his head and sports a beard and looks imposing.

The peasant's mud hut consists of a single room, built of material most easily available. The land tenure is feudal. A peasant is either

the retainer of some Khan or he is a unit in the armed force of his village. The conditions of existence have naturally led to the dwelling-places of these tribes being fortified. If they are in the valley they are protected by towers and walls loop-holed for musketry. If in the hollows of the hills they are strong by their natural position. In either case they are guarded by a hardy and martial people, well armed, brave and trained by constant war.

The Pathan is a great lover of folk dances, music and poetry. He is fond of field-sports, such as hawking, hunting with dogs and shooting. Even a child loves to carry a rifle. Mobility is a weak word for tribesmen's power of movement. They come down hill-sides like falling boulders, not running but bounding, and in crags they literally drop from foothold to foothold. These men are hard as nails, live on little, carry nothing but a rifle and a few cartridges, a knife and a bit of food. Every man is a soldier. In 1937 the tribesmen were in possession of no less than 250,000 weapons of modern precision. The authority of the various empires which claimed in the past to rule this Frontier extended merely to the control over the plains and one or two passages through the mountains. Even passage by a main route through mountains had often to be asserted by force and with great difficulty against the refractory tribes which held the road in use at the time. An understanding of this fact explains the escape of this tribal belt as a whole from subjection to any external power. This, too, is the reason why a tribal form of society has persisted in a country which lay across the passage of countless invaders, including Alexander, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, the most famous conquerers in all history. Asoka's frontier policy was to maintain peaceful relations with his neighbours: "The unsubdued borderers should not be afraid of me, they should trust me and should receive from me happiness and not sorrow."

The bulk of the population of the North-West Frontier Province are Pathans. They call themselves Pakhtuns. The Indus is the ethnographical boundary between the Pathan homelands and the rest of this subcontinent. The Tribal Belt is held by the four important tribes of Afridis, Mohmands, Waziris and Mahsuds. Other tribes are the Orakzais, Yusufzais, Muhammadzais, Bhitannis, Shinwaris and several others. The Yusufzais inhabit Buner and the hilly country beyond the vale of Peshawar. To the north-west of Peshawar, between the Kabul river and the Swat river dwell the Mohmands. Round the Khyber and the south live the Afridis. The southern villages of Tirah are inhabited by heterogenous tribes known collectively as Orakzais or lost tribes. Between the Kurram and the Gomal lies Waziristan, an intricate maze of mountains and valleys and its inhabitants are Waziris. Southwards

still, the tribes belong mostly to the Pawinda clans who are always on the move. Over 200,000 of the nomadic Ghilzai tribe migrate annually from Afghan highlands into the plains of India. The Bhitannis occupy the territory that stretches along the eastern border of Waziristan, from Gomal to Marwat. From Bannu through Kohat stretch the lands of the Khataks. In Bannu dwell the Bannuchis and the Marwats. The flat and dreary wastes of Dera Ismail Khan are peopled chiefly by Jats, the Pathan element forming only about one-third of the total population. Similarly, in the Hazara district the bulk of the population is non-Pathans, being composed of the Punjabi Muslims, Gokhars, and others. With a few exceptions the tribesmen are all Muslims of the orthodox Sunni sect—they recognize all the successors of Mahomed and respect not only the Koran but also the Hadis or traditional sayings that are not embodied in the Koran. From every point of view—ethnic, linguistic and geographical, as well as in traditions and history, the Pathan tribes differ widely from the people of the Punjab.

The Pathans are divided into several dozen separate tribes, numbering from a few thousand to a few hundred thousand each. The tribes are in turn divided into *khels*, which may be roughly equated with clans. The *khels* break down into family systems of varying sizes and complexity. All are theoretically related to each other through descent from a common ancestor. A few of the "free" tribes, mainly the Yusufzais and the Mohmands, have members living in the Settled Districts as well as in the tribal territory. The "free" tribes have preserved the original Pakhtun society virtually intact. They think themselves as Afridis, Wazirs, Mahsuds, etc., and their first allegiance is inevitably to their own clan. They live according to their law, called Pakhtunwali, the way of Pakhtun. Theirs is a rough and untrammelled democracy tempered only a little by the hereditary prestige of certain families and by the authority of the Maliks, Khans or chieftains, whose influence is based primarily on personal bravery, wisdom and strength. The Pathans in the Settled Districts retain their language and culture and a keen sense of their identity with their tribal neighbours.

Even in the Settled Districts the family is regulated by custom and not by the sacred law. Customs are subtle chains with which the primitive man tries to keep intact the pattern of society. In the tribal area where nearly four million people live without law courts, judges and lawyers, and even policemen, one seldom hears of adultery or murders. Elopements are rare, for the risk is great and the price heavy. If the culprits get married, the hunt is slackened, the boy is made to pay damages in the form of giving away two or three girls to the family from which he stole one. But he will not live long if he deceives her or

deserts her. The whole tribe of the girl will hunt him down and his own will refuse to protect him. Custom does not allow protection to a breaker of custom. He stands alone and must pay the price. Even his friends will avoid the funeral. It is hard and brutal, but it works.

Pakhtunwali, sometimes called the Pathan code, rules supreme. Its first commandment is *badal* or *badla*, that is revenge. The obligation to take revenge for a wrong, falls not only upon the man who suffered but also upon his family and his tribe. Since revenge is uninhibited, and insult and retaliation involve clans as well as individuals, blood feuds flourish. Some feuds which are alive today, are generations old. Most frequently the trouble centres on *zar*, *zan*, *zamin*—gold, woman and land.

All too often the feud ends only after one or both families are wiped out. Very rarely it may be terminated when the weaker party, in order to avoid extinction, throws itself upon the mercy of its enemy. This is called *nanawatai*. It involves the ultimate humiliation. The appeaser goes with his women carrying the Koran on their head to offer a few sheep to his enemy and seek his pardon.

"The vendetta or blood feud has eaten into the very core of Afghan life," observes Dr. Pennell, a well-known missionary, who spent sixteen years in the Frontier region and was much admired by the Pathans. "The nation can never progress till public opinion on the question of revenge alters."

The second commandment, *melmastia*, hospitality, is like the first in the rigour it imposes. The host, howsoever distinguished a Malik he may be, sits as an equal with his poorest guest and serves the meals with his own hands. One of the main instruments for implementing *melmastia* is the *hujra*, a guest-house. This consists of a room or two where the visitor is quartered and fed. Each village will have one or two or more *hujras*. Most Maliks and Khans have their own.

In addition to serving as a guest-house, the *hujra* is a kind of club for the local inhabitants. The men of the clan gather there to drink tea and smoke the *chilam* and discuss the affairs of the day. The bachelors of the village sleep in the *hujra*, as the Pathan custom does not allow them to sleep at home after reaching man's estate.

Rules of hospitality also demand that the Pathan accord protection to his guest and to all who claim it from him. In this regard *melmastia* takes precedence over *badal*, and even the enemy who comes seeking the refuge must be granted it and defended against his pursuers.

The mullah, or priest, plays an important role in the Pathan territory. As is the case with the other Muslims, the Pathans have no formally ordained clergy. Any man who feels the call to preach the word of God

becomes a mullah. Most often, however, he comes from a mullah family, one which has traditionally supplied the priest for a particular village or clan.

The jirga is probably the most important Pathan institution. It means assembly of elders. The more democratic a tribe, the wider the jirga. There is no voting; decisions are unanimous and are arrived at by taking the sense of the meeting. It does not ordinarily determine guilt or inflict punishment but seeks to achieve a settlement in accordance with established Pakhtun traditions.

Summing up the Pathan characteristics, Mountstuart Elphinstone, the first Englishman to visit Peshawar, writes: "Their vices are revenge, envy, avarice, rapacity and obstinacy, on the other hand, they are fond of liberty, faithful to their friends, kind to their dependants, hospitable, brave, hardy, frugal, laborious and prudent, and they are less disposed than the nations in their neighbourhood to falsehood, intrigue and deceit. I know no people in Asia who have fewer vices or are less voluptuous and debauched."

In 1857 India was aflame with revolt. The breath of mutiny passed lightly over the Frontier. The Pathans scorned to take advantage of the British while the revolt was on, but renewed their own battle almost immediately afterwards. Between 1858 and 1902, more than forty British expeditions had to take the field. The number of troops employed was 40,000 against the Afridis and the Orakzais in 1897. The British were always haunted by the bogy of Afghan and Russian invasions. "The North-West Frontier is not only the frontier of India," emphasized the Simon Commission, "it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view." It is the "gateway of India."

All the time the British were tightening their grip on the Frontier. In the beginning they controlled only Peshawar, the main towns and the roads which connected them. The main passes, including the Khyber, were still the domain of the hill tribes, some of whom owed a tenuous allegiance to the Amir of Afghanistan. As time went on the British introduced taxes and courts throughout the districts between the Indus River and the Border Hills. They began to extend their influence up the passes. The Pathans fought back, killing the tax collector and occasionally ambushing a British patrol. The British sat in the towns. They came into the hills seldom and at their own risk.

Towards the end of the century the situation changed. Tsarist Russia extended its power deep into Central Asia—Bokhara, Samarkand and Khiva. British fears of the Russian threat to India mounted. "The great game", of which Kipling writes so joyously, became a frantic scurry

for advantage between two expanding empires. Peace and progress on the Frontier were of little concern to the men who ruled India. Security was the all-important objective. To this end, Afghanistan was looked upon as a buffer-state. The Settled Districts along the Indus were made an integral part of India. The tribal territory in the hills was a march-land which must be dominated. The passes were occupied; new roads were built; forts were established and garrisons stationed in them. It was part of the Forward Policy. In the words of Colin Davies: "To the border Pathan there appeared a vision of a great mailed fist, the fingers of which, in the nineties, seemed to be closing around him. Isolated forts garrisoned by the British troops commanded the trade-routes running through his territory, or frowned down upon his native hamlet or terraced fields. Dazzling white roads wound their way like serpents towards his fortress in the mountains. In the wake of demarcation commissions had sprung up long lines of boundary pillars, enclosing his country and threatening that independence which was his proudest boast."

The proud Pathan's reaction was instinctive and violent. Practically every tribe on the Frontier was up in arms at one time or another. The traditions of hospitality and sanctuary were violated as British civilians were ambushed and killed. The British replied in kind: tribesmen were transported to the Andaman Islands; villages and crops were burned; wells and fruit trees destroyed; and women and children starved by blockade.

The British won their security. They put down the risings. They held on to the passes and the roads although they were never able to establish control over the hills. In 1901, Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, formalized the new order by setting up a new province of India, under a Chief Commissioner, calling it the North-West Frontier Province, which included all the settled areas beyond the Indus, and by establishing a strip of tribal territory between the province and Afghanistan, which was directly under the control of the Government of India. Formerly the region had formed part of the Punjab Province. It was decreed that the new province was to be a sealed book, a hunting-ground for the officers of the Political Department and the military. The police force in the five districts was 6,000 strong, costing about three million rupees a year. Special laws and regulations were enforced for the province. Under the Frontier Crimes Regulation people could be sentenced to transportation for life, without being brought before a court of law. The accused person could not claim to have the benefit of legal advice or to be defended by counsel. Certain pro-British landlords or businessmen would be invited to try people even for serious offences like murder.

While in theory the jirga was to give a finding on facts, which a Deputy-Commissioner had to accept if unanimous, in practice, a jirga of their own creation was told what finding was expected of it. The convicted person had no right of appeal. The Chief Commissioner was supposed to revise such orders.

When the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 and Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 were duly introduced in the rest of India, the Frontier Province was entirely left out. The provisions of the Frontier Crimes Regulation were often used against those who advocated reforms for the province. People were asked to furnish heavy securities to keep the peace under section 40 of the regulation, and those who failed, were locked up for any term extending to three years. The regulation was intended for punishing crimes but was used against political workers.

The winds of political unrest which were blowing with growing strength across India after the first World War were felt in the Frontier area. The name of Abdul Ghaffar Khan first came to notice in 1919 when he led an agitation, in common with the rest of India, against the Rowlatt Act which severely restricted political activity in India. Quickly he rose to great popularity and an ardent desire was expressed in 1934 that he should preside over the Indian National Congress, but he shrank back in modesty, saying that he was a learner from Mahatma Gandhi, not an all-India leader. In fact he was by then a popular and respected leader in India. "The unquestioned leader was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 'Fakhr-e-Afghan', 'Fakhre-e-Pathan', 'Pride of the Pathans', 'Gandhi-e-Sarhad', 'the Frontier Gandhi', as he came to be known," observed Jawaharlal Nehru. "More and more he has come to be, in the eyes of the rest of India, the symbol of courage and sacrifice of a gallant and indomitable people, comrades of ours in a common struggle."

"While the Pathans are intensely freedom-loving and resent any kind of subjugation," Abdul Ghaffar said in 1942, "most of them are beginning to understand that their freedom can well harmonize with the conception of Indian freedom, and that is why they have joined hands with the rest of their countrymen in common struggle, instead of favouring the scheme of breaking up India into many states. They have come to realize that the division of India will result in an all-round weakness in the modern world, where no part of it will have sufficient resources and strength to preserve its own freedom. The days of isolation are no more. A new conception of international collaboration and co-operation is seeking to be born. The Pathans hate compulsion and dictation of any type, but of their own free will, they are prepared to work in unity and co-operation with others in this country as well as

their brethren of the tribal territories, who have so long been kept aloof from us and forced to lead a life unworthy of a people. But while I share these sentiments with my people, I cannot for a moment deny them the right of self-determination. There can be no forced conversion to a doctrine, and at the proper time each unit will automatically exercise its own discretion to decide any future. Yet the desirability of India as a whole developing close relations and endeavouring to build up a powerful federation of Asiatic peoples to resist aggression from outside, cannot be ruled out and will act as the chief factor to compel the forces of separatism to think differently and establish close contacts with those they are opposing today. The Asiatic countries will not be aggressive or hostile to others in the world and will strive to develop friendly relations with them. But on no account will they permit the present form of things to continue and labour under adverse conditions. It is encouraging to find that there are many who envisage such a bloc of peace and freedom in the East and look to it for ushering in a new era. The Frontier Province is so situated that, as in the past, it will inevitably become the pivot and centre of all these great changes and alliances, and will begin to play an important role not only in a free India, but in free Asia."

In 1947, India was divided. Abdul Ghaffar was stunned. He told Gandhi that Indians were leaving the Pathans to the mercy of wolves. Gandhi told him: "We will fight Pakistan if they maltreated you. . . It is true that I believe in non-violence, but it will be for the Government of India to help the Pathans to keep their honour and the right of self-determination."

Since 1947 Ghaffar Khan has spent fifteen years of solitary confinement in Pakistani jails. During the couple of years when he was free, he fought against oppression and injustice meted out to his Pakhtun brethren. In 1955 the North-West Frontier Province was amalgamated with Sind, the Punjab and Baluchistan to form the single unit of West Pakistan. The name of the Pakhtuns was wiped off from the pages of history. Celebrating the Pakhtunistan Day in Kabul on August 31, 1965, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said that the Pakhtuns form one nation. It was because of their struggle and sacrifices that independence was achieved and the British were expelled. "Pakistan is created by us," he emphasized. "It is created by the blood of the Pathans. We want to be friendly with Pakistan. The Pathans are demanding only the right to build their own home."

"A *momin*, the faithful," has said Iqbal, "fights to the end even without sword." The life of Abdul Ghaffar Khan is an inspiring saga—a triumph of spirit which knows nothing of force, whose conquests are won by the power of invincible gentleness.



A portrait in calligraphy by Nandalal Bose

Heritage

1890

ABDUL GHAFFAR was born in Hashtanagar, now known as Ashtanagar or "eight towns", in the village of Utmanzai, in the house of Khan Behram Khan in 1890. It is not the custom among the Pathans to note down the birthday of a newly born child. In any case, few of them can read or write. That is why his date of birth is not recorded. "If I say I was born in 1890 it is because my mother used to tell me that I was eleven years old when my brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, got married in 1901," narrates Abdul Ghaffar. "I could tell you the year of my birth, but not the date. For I know the date according to the lunar month, Jeth, but not the Christian date. You and we have more things in common than we know. Our traditions are the same, and after all it should not be forgotten that for centuries the religion of the people of our parts was Buddhism. Our district is strewn with the relics of the Buddhist times, and the names of some of the towns are Buddhist or Hindu, and a number of Pakhtu words are derived from Sanskrit."

Abdul Ghaffar was the fourth child of a tall, beautiful, blue-eyed woman and a sturdy, blue-blooded old Khan of medium stature. A Pathan has generally two names and a son never receives his father's name. His father, Behram Khan, a rich landlord, was a highly respected Khan of his village. He had neither pride nor vanity of being a chief Khan of Hashtanagar, of Muhammadzai clan. He was humble, God-fearing and self-restrained. He was so trustworthy that the poor people would come and leave all their savings in his keeping, for his word was as good as his bond. He had many friends and no enemies. He had no feuds—a unique distinction for a Khan—because he had forgiven all his enemies. He knew no revenge. He believed that there was no dishonour in being deceived, it lay in deceiving. He was a man of his word and was so transparently truthful that none dared to disbelieve or contradict him. He never told a lie, he did not know how to. When there was any village feud he took the side of the underdog. He never believed in dancing attendance upon those in authority, but they all held him in awe. The British officials would address him as "uncle". He liked the British officials, though he could never remember their names. He loved horses and rode to the age of ninety. He was optimistic to a fault and possessed a fine sense of humour. He lived and farmed and laughed and swore merrily upto a ripe old age—almost a century.

Both the father and the mother were unlettered, they lived more in the world of the spirit than of the flesh. The mother would often sit down after her *namaz*, to meditate in silence. She cooked food in a big pot and distributed it among the poor neighbours. Though there was a retinue of servants in the house, the father would insist on carrying a basketful of *nan* on his head and a platter of cooked vegetable to his village *hujra* for travellers passing through. "The travelling visitors, unknown and uncared for, are veritable guests of God," he would say, "and that is why I like to carry the food for them."

"Both my father and my mother lived in my memory as a supreme example of a truly religious life," observes Abdul Ghaffar. Though the father could not tell his age, he had the most vivid recollections of the Revolt of 1857. He was never proud of the record of the Pathans during that critical period. Not without a certain sense of shame, he used to recall how his elder brother served the British by commanding the military guard of the Charsadda Treasury. His father, Saifulla Khan, always sided with his oppressed brethren whenever the British had any clash with the tribes or tried to subjugate them. His grandfather, Obeidulla Khan, was hanged by the Durranis, the then rulers, for his enlightenment and patriotism. He was a very influential, powerful and popular leader of his community."

Like his parentage, Abdul Ghaffar's birthplace is remarkable in many ways. Hashtanagar, a tract in Charsadda tahsil of Peshawar district, comprises a strip of country that extends ten miles eastward from the Swat river, and stretches from the hills in the north to the Kabul river in the south. The inhabitants are Muhammadzais, a small and well settled Pathan clan—the Pakhtu of Hashtanagar is noted for its purity of idiom and pronunciation. The tract is divided into two sections—lowlands irrigated by the Swat river and a high plain which is intersected by the Swat river canal. The greater of the two great mounds of Charsadda, was the ancient capital of Gandhara in the days before the Kushan emperors transferred the seat of government to Peshawar, the ancient Purushapura. Charsadda is twenty miles from Peshawar, and Utmanzai, a village with over 5,000 inhabitants, is beautifully situated on the river Swat, about four miles from Charsadda. For twenty miles west lies the territory of the Mohmand tribes through which one enters Afghanistan. Born and bred in these surroundings Abdul Ghaffar is a child of nature. "There is no spot on earth, so beautiful." The Peshawar valley abounds in fruits of all kinds—apricots, oranges, plums and pears. The fields bear crops of wheat, rice and sugar-cane. Charsadda is fed by the maze of rivers, fertilizing the great, green plain. The canals flow placidly between the green banks overhung by stately trees. This

plain, with its agricultural yield, has been a key point on the route between the subcontinent and the rest of the old world.

From 1849 to 1901, the North-West Frontier territory formed part of the Punjab Province. In the Punjab the British had established many schools for the education of the Punjabis, but there was no such facility for the Frontier region. The Britishers and the Punjabis neglected the education of Pakhtuns. All the officers in the Education Department were Punjabis. There was hardly any primary school in the Frontier villages. In other parts of India the British used to impart primary education through the regional language. The Pakhtuns were the only unfortunate community that had hardly any opportunity for education, and if there was any, the Pakhtun children were taught through the medium of an alien language, Urdu.

In the mosques there was nominal arrangement for the religious education of the Pakhtun children, and that too was meant mostly for training the mullahs and the *imams*. "The Pakhtuns generally had no interest in such education," observes Abdul Ghaffar Khan. "Before the advent of Islam, the Pakhtuns were Hindus and, therefore, the same harmful tradition of reserving education for the Brahmins only was in vogue among us."

"It is most regrettable," he says, "that the British had established no schools for us, and if there was any, the mullahs were set behind us to propagate that it was a sin to learn. They wanted the Pakhtuns to remain illiterate and ignorant. That is why the Pathans remained the most backward community throughout India. It is a pity that our land which, at different periods of history, was a centre of learning and culture, fell on evil days because of unfortunate circumstances and the crass stupidity of the mullahs. The result was that the entire community sank so low that they were not inclined to do any good work."

"Our land has been witness to various cultures," says Abdul Ghaffar with pride. "At one time this land was the cradle of Aryan civilization. Later it saw the flowering of Buddhism under which we made rapid progress. We still have many relics of this period. Even today there are two giant images of Buddha in Bamian. They, perhaps, are the largest of his statues in the world, carved out of living rock. Surrounding the statues on all sides, on the lap of the hill, is a large group of caves, where the Buddhist monks and novices lived once. Beside Bamian, near Jalalabad, at Ada, there was a big Buddhist university, the ruins of which are still there. The same is the case of Taxila. The art of erection and carving of the statues in stones proves that the Pakhtuns once had great civilization and culture which reached out to the Far East via Central Asia. We carried to the rest of the world the message of the

Buddha. Only recently near our village, the Archaeological Department excavated a big city, probably, of the Gandhara period. If we go further back in history, we find that this land of Pakhtuns was a cradle of the great human race. Many scholars hold that the Aryans saw the light of day on the banks of Amu river and reached a high level of culture. When they increased in numbers and there was scarcity of space for their herds of sheep in that region, they gradually migrated to new lands. A part of them went on in one direction through Iran to Europe and in the other they marched down to Hindustan. And here they divided into separate communities. According to the geographical and climatic conditions they evolved different cultures and languages. But when they lived in their original land of Aryanavijo—Afghanistan and Pakhtunistan—they spoke one language, the so-called Aryak language. The Pakhtu language is very near to this Aryak language. It was the same Aryanavijo which gave birth to the first prophet in history, Zoroaster. He hailed from Balkh and later went to Iran. His verses in praise of Balkh are a witness to this fact. And this was the land where the Vedic hymns of the Hindus were composed. And this is the land that gave birth to Panini, who wrote the grammar of Sanskrit language. Panini was a resident of the present tahsil of Swabi, situated on the bank of Indus. The word 'Indus' as well as the word 'Hindu' are both derived from the Pakhtu word '*sind*', which means river.

"After the great migration only two branches of the Aryan family remain in the original home—the Pakhtuns and the Baluch—who have been entrusted with the duty of looking after the great tradition.

"Later, Islam came to this land. By the time Islam reached here, the Arabs had lost that spiritual light, godly sentiments and self-restraint, which the Prophet had instilled in them or which were later propagated by great personalities like Abu Bakr and Omar. The Arabs had already blundered in extending their empire and autocratic hold and they were still expanding, so much so that they had already lost the lofty ideals of the Prophet's holy preachings and the spirit of diffusing virtue.

"The result was that we were deprived of our rich culture, and in exchange, we did not receive even the true spirit of Islam. In spite of this, some of our learned and godly people wandered throughout the Islamic world in search of Islam and won for themselves an honourable position in Islamic philosophy, learning and thought, of which, indeed, we can feel proud."

Early Years

1895–1909

Behram Khan was not educated, but he had great respect for learning. His son, Abdul Ghaffar, was five or six years old when he was admitted in a mosque to take lessons from a mullah. The poor mullah was himself a stranger to learning. He could hardly write. He only remembered a few *surahs* and he could read the Koran but could not understand its meaning. On Abdul Ghaffar's starting the lessons, his parents were highly pleased and held celebrations and distributed sweets and eatables. The mullah did not teach him alphabets but started teaching him the *siparah*. It was not the fault of the poor man; this was the accepted method then. The mullah was cruel and harsh; he used to beat the students severely. In the course of time Abdul Ghaffar finished reading the Holy Koran. The parents were pleased with their son's performance and they again held celebrations. They distributed alms generously and the mullah too received a big sum of money.

The Pakhtuns had a yearning for education and most of them used to send their children for getting educated in the mosques. There were no other schools in the country-side and they were not aware of any other education. And if there was any school in any city, the mullahs would not allow the people to avail of that education. They used to say that the education of the present day was *kufar*, un-Islamic. They used to teach their pupils and other illiterates the following verse, which was loudly and ardently recited in the open lanes and bazars:

Sabaq de madrase wai para de paise wai
Jannat ke bae zai navi dozakh ke bai ghase wahi.

"Those who learn at school, they do so for money. They will have no place in heaven and will find themselves in hell."

Abdul Ghaffar was fortunate in having a brave and large-hearted father and a pious and loving mother, who did not heed the *fatwa* of the mullahs and the cries of their followers. Throughout Hashtanagar, Khan Sahib was the first youth who was sent to a school. And when Abdul Ghaffar had finished with the Koran lessons he too was sent to the Municipal Board High School in Peshawar. He was then eight years old. The mullahs secretly started maligning Behram Khan's family. Openly they did not dare to apply *kufar fatwa*, because Behram Khan was a powerful and popular Khan of the village.

Abdul Ghaffar was fond of listening to stories—tales from books and tales told to him. He used to play mostly with the sweepers' children. His companions used to say: "They are bhangis, why play with them!" But he did not listen to them, nor did their bidding have any effect on his mind. Even when he grew up his contacts were mostly with the artisans: blacksmiths, weavers, carpenters and sweepers.

He took his preliminary education up to the primary classes in the Municipal Board High School and then joined the Edwardes Memorial Mission High School at Peshawar, where the Rev. E. F. E. Wigram was his headmaster. His elder brother, Khan Sahib, too was studying there and passed the Punjab University matriculation in 1905. The province possessed no university of its own, and its only college, the Edwardes Mission College at Peshawar, was affiliated to the Punjab University at Lahore in 1903. In the North-West Frontier Province the number of matriculates was only 15 in 1891 and 71 in 1903. And there were hardly a dozen high schools in the province then, the best known being the mission schools at Peshawar and Bannu under the supervision of the Rev. Mr. Wigram and the Rev. Dr. Pennell.

"Any parent sending his son to the mission school will be excommunicated," was the *fatwa* of the mullahs when the mission schools were opened. Later the fiat went forth: "Let the boys go to school but beware lest they learn English, for English is the language of infidelity and will certainly destroy their souls." And still later: "Let the boys read English, so long as they do not read the Christian scriptures, for the Christians have tampered with these books and it is no longer lawful for the Muslims to read them."

In the mission school the work of the day commenced with the roll-call, at which a portion of the scripture was read by the headmaster. Although Abdul Ghaffar associated himself with the school activities he led a quiet life after his own fancy. Though not keen on sports, he played cricket and football, and helped his friends by carrying their bats and sports equipment. He went out hunting with his gun, but killed no beast or bird. One of his close friends was Abdul Rehman, who accompanied Dr. M. A. Ansari on his Red Crescent Mission to Turkey in 1911 and stayed on there to become a distinguished lieutenant of the Ataturk.

Abdul Ghaffar was in the sixth class when, in 1906, his elder brother went to Bombay to join the medical college. He continued his studies in the mission school with his servant, Barani Kaka, who used to impress on him the glamour of the military service. Barani Kaka harped upon the smart uniform and the sword dangling by the side of the military officer, leading the disciplined soldiers. Ultimately, young Abdul Ghaffar was himself impressed and was persuaded to send an application to

the Commander-in-Chief of India for a commission in the army without seeking the consent of his parents. Every Pathan is a soldier and Abdul Ghaffar had the advantage of coming from a rich Khan family. An official scrutiny was being made and he was awaiting its result. In the meanwhile he was promoted to the tenth class in the school. The matriculation examination had begun; he had finished half the examination papers when he was informed that a commission was granted and he was ordered to present himself the following day at ten o'clock before the Recruiting Officer. He was pleased and he left off the examination and went to the Recruiting Office. There he was examined and his name was enrolled for direct commission.

In the Mardan cantonment were stationed both cavalry and infantry, well known throughout India as the Guides. In it the sons of rich and influential people were admitted as sepoys with great difficulty. It was made up of trustworthy local men to act as the eyes and ears of regular troops in the field. Following this principle, the time-honoured scarlet was laid aside for the dust-coloured loose uniform, which later, known as khaki, became the fighting dress of the entire land-forces of the Commonwealth. The first cadres were gathered in Peshawar in 1846; a few years later the corps moved to Mardan. Abdul Ghaffar was taken in the Guides because he was a smart and impressive youth—his height was six feet and three inches—belonging to a rich and respectable Khan family. His father was immensely pleased with this achievement.

One day he went to meet a friend in Peshawar, who was a cavalry officer. They were standing and talking when a British subaltern arrived on the scene. Abdul Ghaffar's friend was bare-headed and had parted his hair in the smart western style. The subaltern was enraged at the sight and remarked: "Well, damn Sardar Saheb, you too aspire to be an Englishman!" The Sardar Saheb's face turned ashen pale and he had no courage to retort back. Abdul Ghaffar felt greatly offended and resolved not to join the army and serve the British.

"The military was not without glamour," remarks Abdul Ghaffar. "There were a number of people of my acquaintance who enjoyed high positions, and I flattered myself that I was specially fitted to look like and enjoy an equal footing with Englishmen. But Allah had willed it otherwise."

The father bitterly opposed his hasty decision and was greatly displeased with him for throwing away such a coveted rank in the Guides. Abdul Ghaffar found nothing glamorous about the military service, on the contrary it seemed to him disgraceful and humiliating. To get moral support he wrote a detailed letter to his elder brother, Khan Sahib, who was then studying in England. Khan Sahib supported his younger

brother and wrote to the father: "You should not coerce him or be displeased with him."

He proceeded to Campbellpur with a colleague, to continue his studies and got himself admitted in a local school. But that place was very warm and did not suit him. In those days he had acquired a taste for Arabic studies and the reputation of Maulvi Nooruddin of Kadian attracted his attention. Abdul Ghaffar left his province with a friend. But there too he did not like the atmosphere and one night he had a strange dream: "I fell down in a deep well and then a man approached me extending his hand and I was taken out of the well. 'Don't you see this well that you have thrown yourself into it?" he said to me. When he got up in the morning he told about the dream to his colleague and they both decided to return to their village.

Soon he proceeded to Aligarh and got himself admitted there as a day-scholar. During the summer vacation Abdul Ghaffar, after a year's stay at Aligarh, went back to his village. Meantime, his father received a letter from Khan Sahib, who was studying medicine in England, that his younger brother too should proceed there to become an engineer. He gave this advice because Abdul Ghaffar was good in mathematics, particularly in geometry.

The father decided that his second son too should proceed to England and he informed Khan Sahib accordingly, who reserved a seat for his brother in a P. & O. steamship. The father gave Rs. 3,000 to Abdul Ghaffar to prepare for the voyage. When he went to his mother to get her consent, she began to cry and would not agree to his going abroad. In vain he argued with her. She was told by the people and she believed that a person who goes to *vilayat*, a strange land, never comes back to his native land. "One of your sons has already gone abroad and he will not return, and if the second son also goes out then you will become an unlucky, solitary soul," she was told. There was fear of his turning Christian and marrying an English girl and becoming a stranger to his people. Besides, there were a couple of deaths in the family which were considered anything but propitious for his going abroad for higher studies. The mother was adamant. He had deep love and regard for his mother and she too intensely loved him. He did not like to proceed to England against her will.

Abdul Ghaffar owed much to Rev. Mr. Wigram, whose Christian example had inspired him when quite young to devote everything he had to the service of the country:

"I had taken my education in a mission school and many of my companions had studied in the Islamia School at Peshawar. My education had created in me the spirit of dedicated service to my community and

country, but my companions had no such inclination. The credit for this goes to my teachers who influenced me a lot. The teacher who had greatly impressed me and had created in me the spirit of service to the creatures of God was the Britisher, the Rev. Mr. E. F. E. Wigram. His brother was a doctor. They came from a well-known family and both the brothers were dedicated to the mission. All their expenses were borne by their parents. The elder brother was the headmaster of the Edwardes Memorial Mission High School and the younger brother was a doctor in charge of a mission hospital. I was a witness to the love and the spirit with which both the brothers used to serve the people. I was residing in the boarding-house near their bungalow. Our headmaster, the Rev. Mr. Wigram, used to give scholarships to three or four poor students and that too had a great effect on me. I said to myself: 'We Pakhtuns have no sympathy for our poor brothers who need our help, and they who came from foreign land and belong to an alien nation and faith, how much sympathy they have for humanity!' That is why as the Persian proverb says, '*Kharbuza ra kharbuza dida rang me girad,*' 'a melon takes the colour by seeing another melon', I also took colour from them. When my mother did not give her consent to go to England I made up my mind to serve the creatures of God and, particularly, my people who, at that time, due to their stupidity and backwardness, were heading towards disaster and chaos."

Reformer

1910–15

The mullahs feared that if the people were enlightened they would no more get alms and gifts. Abdul Ghaffar explained to them that their welfare lay in the prosperity of the people, and the progress of the nation depended on the enlightenment of the people. The British mullahs, the missionaries, led a secure and comfortable life, because Britain was a prosperous nation. Islam has enjoined that it is the duty of every man and woman to get educated. "Go in quest of knowledge even unto China," the Prophet has said. "It is better that the people take their education in the schools opened by the British than remain illiterate," Abdul Ghaffar told the mullahs. "When you ask the people not to go to the schools started by the British, you should open your own schools." He tried to enlighten the mullahs without any success. "When God could not make these mullahs understand, how could I?"

Abdul Ghaffar and a few of his companions met together to organize the spread of education in the Frontier Province. In this work the Haji Saheb of Turangzai, a prominent divine, helped them to a great extent. Turangzai is a village about a mile from Utmanzai. The Haji Saheb became known when in 1911 he started his own schools as instruments for social reforms. Under the patronage of the Haji Saheb, Abdul Ghaffar and his colleagues founded "Dar-ul-Ulum", of which Maulvi Taj Mohamed was the supervisor. Maulvi Fazle Rabi and Maulvi Fazle Mohamed Makhfi became his colleagues. Its function was to popularize education and to open schools in the villages.

Abdul Ghaffar and Maulvi Abdul Aziz opened a school in 1910 at Utmanzai. In course of time, such schools were opened throughout the province, in which many students got themselves admitted.

Abdul Ghaffar and his colleagues kept in touch with some of the Islamic educational institutions in the country. His colleagues, Fazle Rabi Saheb and Fazle Makhfi Saheb, were educated at Deoband, the well-known Islamic institution, of which Maulana Mohamedul Hasan, a savant and a pious man, was the principal. Abdul Ghaffar took a great liking to the maulana, because he was a patriot. Through him he met Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi, who used to teach the Koran to the English-educated youth in the Fatehpuri Mosque in Delhi. He used to pay Rs. 50 as scholarship to a graduated student. He was of the view that the English-educated section of the community was ignorant

of religion and if they got acquainted with the true spirit of Islam, they would serve the nation and the people better. The Deoband institution was started to fight the Aligarh school of thought and it had a number of schools to its credit throughout the country. The students from the Frontier took their religious education at Deoband. Abdul Ghaffar and some of his colleagues used to visit Deoband secretly for consultation and discussion. The Government had planted informers in the institution to report on its activities.

Abdul Ghaffar was in touch with some of the most progressive and revolutionary divines in India. Some of his co-workers were trained by them. He used to subscribe to the Urdu daily, *Zamindar*, and the weekly, *Al Hilal*, edited by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The publication of *Al Hilal* was a turning-point in the history of Urdu journalism. The first issue came out in June 1912 and at once created a revolutionary stir among the masses. The demand for *Al Hilal* was so great that, within the first three months, all the old issues had to be reprinted, as every new subscriber wanted the entire set.

The leadership of the Muslim politics at that time rested with the Aligarh party and its members regarded themselves as the trustees of Sir Syed Ahmed's policies. Their basic tenet was that the Muslims must be loyal to the British Crown and remain aloof from the freedom movement. When *Al Hilal* raised a different slogan and its popularity and circulation increased, they felt that their leadership was threatened. They, therefore, began to oppose *Al Hilal* and even went to the extent of threatening to kill its editor, Maulana Azad. The more the old leadership opposed, the more popular *Al Hilal* became with the community. Within two years *Al Hilal* reached a circulation of 26,000 copies per week, a figure which was till then unheard of in Urdu journalism.

Those who used to subscribe for *Al Hilal* were in the black list of the police. Abdul Ghaffar not only subscribed the weekly but used to read it out to others. It had created a great interest in the people.

Behram Khan was rather uneasy about his son's activities. His two daughters were well married. His eldest son, Khan Sahib, was married and had finished his medical studies in England. His youngest son, Abdul Ghaffar, had resigned his commission in the army and had taken to farming, study of religion and spread of education in the villages. Behram Khan did not understand this sort of thing. Being the youngest child, Abdul Ghaffar was his mother's pet. He loved his old father and always gave noble reasons for doing things. The old Khan forgave him everything. Besides, the mother supported him. She seemed to understand him better than the father. She understood everything the son did. And if she said it was all right, it must be so. So Behram Khan gave him

a village to manage, married him to a girl he wanted to marry, and hoped that he would give up his strange notions and settle down.

Abdul Ghaffar was married in 1912 and the following year a son, Ghani, was born. He adored his wife, a lovable and generous creature, well-bred and from a good, old family. He loved his child, but, very often, when he sat by the fire, he would stop cuddling it and would get engrossed in his own thoughts. His wife knew these moods and long silences and hated them. She slowly realized that there was something in this strong, handsome husband of hers that made him forget her beautiful eyes and lovely baby. He was a man of few words and none could fathom his mind.

In those days, no political meetings were held in the North-West Frontier Province, out of fear of the authorities. Abdul Ghaffar kept in touch with the happenings in the country by reading his favourite journals. In 1913 he saw an announcement of the annual session of the Muslim League in Agra to be presided over by Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah and to be addressed by Maulana Azad and others. So he went to Agra with a few friends. He found the session interesting. From there he went to Delhi for a short stay and returned to his village to continue his educational activities.

In 1914 he visited Deoband at the request of Maulana Mohamedul Hasan, accompanied by his colleagues, Maulvi Fazle Mohamed and Maulvi Fazle Rabi. In a small gathering of *maulvis* in Deoband it was decided to open a centre in the tribal territory of the N.-W. Frontier in order to prepare and start the struggle to free India from the British domination.

Formerly, there had been a centre established in Buner for the same purpose. But soon it was discovered that it was in wrong hands. The so-called crusaders were a lazy lot and they had no contact with the local people. Among them were also some informers. Now it was left to Abdul Ghaffar and Maulvi Fazle Mohamed to select a suitable and safe centre in Bajaur, the final decision mainly resting with Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi.

Soon after reaching his village, Abdul Ghaffar and his colleague secretly left for Bajaur. They reached Dargai by train and drove in a tonga upto the edge of Malakand, where armed pickets were posted to search and interrogate every individual, whether walking or driving, and to make arrests on the slightest suspicion. Abdul Ghaffar was sitting in the back seat, shrouded in chaddar. His height and appearance were difficult to conceal and he felt somewhat nervous when the sepoy approached the tonga. It was dusk, and night was fast approaching. "There is none inside the tonga," pleaded the shrewd tonga driver.

Abdul Ghaffar's companion had got down from the tonga. The sepoy approached the tonga and eyed Abdul Ghaffar and ordered the tonga driver to go ahead. They drove some distance and then got down from the tonga to spend the night in a village. Early next morning, they started walking and reached a stream at the end of the day. It was winter and there was very little water in the stream. They crossed the stream and reached Fazle Mohamed's village, where Abdul Ghaffar rested for the night and the following day. Fazle Mohamed stayed on for Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi and deputed his cousin's son to accompany Abdul Ghaffar.

After three days' arduous journey on foot, through difficult terrain, they reached Bajaur. It is bounded on the north by the Panjkora river; on the east and south by the Mohmand territories; and on the west by the crest of the eastern watershed of the Kunar river, which divides it from Afghanistan. Its population was 100,000, and its area nearly 5,000 square miles. Abdul Ghaffar visited almost every village of this territory and selected a village, Zagai, in the territory of Mohmands for the centre. There he waited a couple of days for Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi to arrive. To avoid any suspicion on the part of the villagers Abdul Ghaffar retired to a tiny cell of a mosque to perform a *chilla*, intense prayer. When even after the prayer Obeidullah Saheb did not turn up, Abdul Ghaffar and his companion left for Malakand.

The Political Agent of Malakand had struck such terror that even influential people trembled at the sight of a Britisher and they used to bend low and bow before him from a distance. And if a tribesman passed by a Britisher without greeting him, he was arrested and put into stocks. Abdul Ghaffar left Malakand and after a strenuous journey returned to his village. Many people came to see him because he had told them, at the time of departure, that he was going on a pilgrimage to Ajmer.

After a while the first World War started and the plan for a centre of revolutionary activities did not materialize. Maulana Mohamedul Hasan of Deovband left on *haj* for Mecca and there he was arrested and handed over to the British. Obeidullah Saheb went to Afghanistan. The Haji Saheb of Turangzai removed himself to Buner, and with him went many of Abdul Ghaffar's close associates. The Haji Saheb intended to continue his activities there and the people quickly responded. The mullahs intrigued against him and wanted to hand him over to the British. He came to know about the plot and escaped to the Mohmands. All his schools were closed down by the Britishers and the teachers were arrested. Abdul Ghaffar thus lost a sincere and very influential friend and colleague.

In December 1915, soon after the birth of his second son, Wali, his first son, Ghani, was taken seriously ill. There was raging an epidemic of influenza all over the land. Ghani, lying down with influenza, lost his consciousness and all hope of his recovery was abandoned. It was evening. Abdul Ghaffar was sitting on a prayer-mat. He had finished his *namaz* and was asking for God's grace, while Ghani lay on a *charpai* before him. Ghani's mother came in, walked round the *charpai* and stood at her son's head. She raised her hands in supplication and, with tears rolling down her eyes, humbly prayed to the Almighty: "O Allah, transfer my son's affliction and disease to me and spare his life." The night passed in agony. In the morning, Ghani gradually began to rally and his mother fell ill. Ghani recovered, but the mother passed away. She died before she was twenty-five.

Abdul Ghaffar's restlessness increased. He left his two children in the care of his mother and drowned his sorrow in work and service. He had found a new love, his people. Pakhtuns must be united, educated, reformed and organized. He drew their attention to the misery and darkness of their lives. He tried to make them think. He succeeded to a great extent. The simple Khans of Hashtanagar gathered in a mosque and declared that he was their "Badshah", king. Thus, he became the Badshah Khan, the name by which he is generally known.

The Plunge

1915–19

The declaration of war in 1914, aroused less interest and excitement among the Frontier population than might have been expected. About 12,000 persons from the Peshawar district had enlisted in the army. The cessation of the hostilities in Europe in 1918 was hailed with universal delight, but the dominant factor in rejoicings was not so much pleasure in the victory of the allies as the expectation of a speedy reduction in the high prices of all commodities—a hope which was doomed to bitter disappointment. Agitation for reforms and the surcharged atmosphere in the rest of India reached the Frontier Province.

Although the war did not touch India, its effects were in evidence. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report came out in July 1918. It recommended the dyarchic experiment in the direction of responsible government for all the provinces excepting the North-West Frontier Province. No franchise for Pathans, no elections, no legislature, no ministry—not even elections for local bodies. The Pathans resented this treatment.

The year 1919 was one of the most fateful years in the history of India. All sections of the people were ready for action. Peasants were suffering acutely from the rise in prices. Industrial workers were resentful at the appalling conditions under which they had to work, and the beginning of the year saw an unprecedented outbreak of strikes. Muslims were angry with the treatment meted out by Great Britain to the defeated Caliph, and the extremist element in the Indian National Congress was resentful of broken promises.

The Government of India, realizing their unpopularity, tried to gag the voice of revolt. The Rowlatt Bills, embodying the recommendations of the Sedition Committee, made their appearance in February 1919. One was a temporary measure, intended to deal with the situation arising from the expiry of the Defence of India Rules. The second bill was meant to make a permanent change in the criminal law of the land. The possession of a seditious document, with the mere intention to publish or circulate it, was to be made punishable with imprisonment. The satyagraha pledge adopted by Gandhi said: "The bills are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the state itself is based. We solemnly affirm that in the event of these bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn we shall

refuse civilly to obey these laws . . . and we further affirm that in this struggle, we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person and property."

Gandhi now occupied the most prominent position in public life. The issue of the forthcoming reforms receded to the background, and the Rowlatt Bills, "an unmistakable symptom of a deep-seated disease in the governing body", became the target of bitterest criticism and agitation.

In March 1919 the notorious Rowlatt Bills were passed in spite of the united opposition of all elected Indian members. They were denounced by Srinivasa Sastri, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Vithalbhai Patel and many others. Gandhi called upon the people of India to mobilize in thousands and convince the Government of what they were to expect in the near future. The date of an all-India hartal was originally fixed for March 30, but it was subsequently changed to April 6. A week before April 6, Delhi, mistaking the date, had observed a most imposing hartal. Swami Shraddhanand, the great leader of the Arya Samaj, addressed a huge audience in the famous Juma Masjid of Delhi. The police and military tried to disperse a mammoth procession and shot at it, killing some people. Swami Shraddhanand, tall and stately in his sanyasin's garb, faced with bared chest the bayonets of Gurkhas in the Chandni Chowk. India was thrilled by the incident.

The nation-wide hartal on April 6 was a complete success. It was marked by unprecedented enthusiasm. Here and there acts of violence were noticeable, and the Government stepped in with severe measures of repression. On April 13, soon after a peaceful meeting had begun in the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar, the people were fired upon till the ammunition was exhausted and hundreds of unarmed and peaceful people—men, women and children—were killed. The word Amritsar became a synonym for massacre. Bad as this was, there were other and even more shameful deeds all over the Punjab. Martial law was declared all over the province.

The North-West Frontier Province fully participated in the movement. There were unprecedented hartals all over the province. A large number of people attended a meeting held at Utmanzai on April 6 and addressed by Abdul Ghaffar. A resolution condemning the Rowlatt Bills was passed. It was a historic occasion when 90-year old father of Abdul Ghaffar attended his first political meeting.

The Government got panicky. At this time the war had also started with Afghanistan. King Amanullah Khan was sympathetic towards Indian national movement. Promptly, martial law was declared in the Peshawar district. Abdul Ghaffar and some of his colleagues left their

homes with the intention to go to Mohmand and from there to Afghanistan. As they reached Mohmand, Abdul Ghaffar's old father, Behram Khan, followed them and forbade them from proceeding further to Afghanistan, and brought them back to Utmanzai. Out of fear of the authority they were hiding themselves during the day and visiting home in the night.

The police came to know of their presence and arrested Abdul Ghaffar, took him to Mardan and lodged him in a jail. The following day he was produced before the Police Superintendent, who ordered that he should be fettered. Again he was taken to jail; there were no fetters big enough for his feet, but the jail staff forced the fetters on his feet with great difficulty and put him in a motor-car. Accompanied by the Superintendent of Police and the Assistant-Commissioner of Mardan he was taken to Peshawar and was produced before the Superintendent of Police and sent to the lock-up in the cantonment. His fettered feet were bleeding. The following day an Afridi Police Inspector went to the cell and ordered Abdul Ghaffar: "Come out, you have to appear before the court." It was no use arguing with the arrogant officer and so he said: "My feet are paining, I am not able to walk to the court. If you fetch a tonga I will go, but if you don't, I won't go." Ultimately, he was taken to the court in a tonga. There were three or four Britishers sitting in the court and they put him some questions. "Did you move among the people agitating against the Government?" they asked. Abdul Ghaffar retorted: "The people among whom I moved were all your loyal Khans and Maliks." After the queries, they sent him out, while they were taking a decision. After an hour he was taken to prison and confined to the barracks in which were many Pathans.

The arrest, trial and imprisonment are thus described by Abdul Ghaffar:

"There was no overt action of satyagraha. The fact of our having a public meeting on April 6 at Utmanzai was quite enough for the authorities. Though I was arrested, there was no kind of trial. I was asked if I was a 'Badshah of Pathans'. I said I did not know it but I knew that I was a servant of the community and that we could not take the Rowlatt Bills lying down. The jirga that waited in deputation on me used all kinds of threats and all kinds of specious arguments. The jirga argued that the Frontier Crimes Regulation, which was already in force in the province, was, if anything, worse than the Rowlatt Bills, and that if the Pathans had no grievance against the regulation it was hardly fair for them to join in the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills. Besides, when British India had so far hardly ever shown sympathy for the Pathans, why should the Pathans be anxious to run any risk for the ungrateful

people in British India? But this argument fell flat upon me. I remained adamant and so I was arrested with a number of others.

"I was not only an ordinary convict but a most dangerous convict. I was taken to the jail handcuffed and I had fetters on during the time of my imprisonment. I weighed 220 lb. and there were no fetters to fit my ankles. Whether a special pair was made or not, I don't know. But they were hard put to it to find a pair, and when they put one on me, the portion above the ankle bled profusely. That apparently did not worry the authorities, who remarked that I should not take long to get accustomed to them. As though this was not enough, they made a most vicious attempt to implicate me in a serious offence. A Pathan from my village had been tried and convicted for having tampered with the telegraph wires and was asked if he knew me. He replied in the affirmative and added that he had joined the movement because of my appeal. 'Well, then,' he was asked, 'did he not instigate you to break the wires?' To which he gave an emphatic 'no'. Later, when my father came to see me he felt very happy, because the rumour had spread that I was hanged."

After the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar and his colleagues, the troops went to Utmanzai and surrounded the village and collected all the villagers in the compound of the Azad school. The British soldiers made the villagers sit down and mounted the canons and vigorously started loading them. The people felt that they were going to be blown up, so they said their prayers. The trick was played on the villagers to frighten them. The troops also indulged in looting the village. A punitive fine of Rs. 30,000 was imposed on the villagers, but over Rs. 100,000 were extracted. Over a hundred and fifty people were kept as hostages in jail until the fine was paid. Behram Khan and other relatives were kept in jail for three months. Behram Khan was glad to be lodged in the same jail as his son. "Otherwise, I should not have been able to see my son for days or years, who knows!"

It was a period of great anxiety to the British, because the political agitation and the attempted invasion from Afghanistan occurred simultaneously. The Britishers were determined to crush the movement by terrorizing the Pathans. But the then Chief Commissioner, Sir George Roos-Keppel, an able and sympathetic administrator, stopped repression. Abdul Ghaffar was released after six months' imprisonment.

Hijrat Movement

1920

WHEN Abdul Ghaffar came out of jail, his old parents had arranged his betrothal and wanted that he should marry soon. With his cousin, Abbas Khan, he left for Peshawar to make purchases. They reached Sardaryab to find the policemen waiting near the bridge. Both were arrested and brought back to the police station at Charsadda and then were made to march again to Peshawar. There they were taken to the bungalow of Mr. Short, the chief C.I.D. officer, and made to stand on the road in the biting cold of winter. It was evening and then came the night. The C.I.D. officer was having his drink, sitting comfortably near the fire.

"Why are we arrested? What shall we say when we are produced before the police officer?" asked Abbas Khan, shivering in the cold. Abdul Ghaffar told him to tell the truth boldly and never to make any false statement.

Late in the night, they were called in for interrogation by Mr. Short, who was well known for his arrogance. They were arrested on suspicion of being involved in a bomb incident at Nowshera. "Speak gently," shouted Mr. Short at Abdul Ghaffar, who was replying to questions unperturbed. Abdul Ghaffar said: "When I speak loudly you ask me to speak softly, and when I speak softly, you ask me to speak loudly. You, please, demonstrate to me how to speak. ' Mr. Short lost his temper, called in the policemen and handed him over to them. They took him away and put him in a police lock-up. Abbas Khan was separated from him and kept in another cell. That night Abdul Ghaffar was not given even bread to eat.

The cell had a cement floor and a barred door. A couple of dirty, lice-laden blankets were lying on the floor. It was intensely cold and Abdul Ghaffar was compelled to cover himself with these blankets. When he got up in the morning, his clothes were full of lice. He picked up lice, one by one, and threw them away. He was confined there for a week and then produced before a Britisher, who set him free.

"Why was I arrested?" asked Abdul Ghaffar.

He casually said, "I was investigating your case."

"Could you not investigate before you arrested me?"

"It all depends on me whether to arrest and then make an inquiry or first inquire and then arrest," retorted the Britisher.

"I am a human being, after all," said Abdul Ghaffar. "Think of my position. You put me in trouble for no reason. I was not running away, you could have arrested me if I were guilty."

"What is this tall talk about your position?" he curtly remarked.

There the discussion abruptly ended and Abdul Ghaffar returned to his village.

According to the wishes of his old parents, Abdul Ghaffar married again. He was immersed in public activities and his jail experiences drew him more to politics. At the beginning of 1920 he went to Delhi to participate in the Khilafat conference, in which Gandhi, Maulana Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, the Ali brothers and many prominent Muslims participated. In the peace terms there were proposals curtailing the temporal powers of the Caliph, who was the Sultan of Turkey. The Muslims considered this as against their religion and as a breach of promise on the part of the British Government. The Muslim divines of India, whose collective power and influence was shattered after the Revolt of 1857, felt that they should again come together. Maulana Azad entered the field, with his profound learning, his matchless powers of eloquence and persuasion and his modern outlook. He had been released from internment about that time. Though he was the youngest of them all, more than any other Muslim leader, he was a tower of strength to Gandhi, who proposed a programme of non-cooperation in connection with the Khilafat cause.

An offshoot of the Khilafat agitation was the *hijrat* movement. Many Indian Muslims decided to leave their country as a protest against the British policy towards the Caliph. India had become a Dar-ul-harb, land of war; it was their religious duty to give up everything and go on pilgrimage, *hijrat*, to a Dar-ul-salam, a land of peace, to a land of true believers. Those who decided to make a sacrifice moved across to Afghanistan through the Peshawar district and up the Khyber. A *hijrat* committee was formed in Peshawar and all those who intended to migrate to Afghanistan had to go through it. The committee provided all the facilities to the *muhajarins*, exiles. In the beginning the British discouraged the people from going out on *hijrat* to Afghanistan, but later, they encouraged them to migrate in large numbers. Thus they thought Afghanistan would be greatly burdened with the emigrants and they themselves would get rid of political workers from India. They had also sent spies with the emigrants to Afghanistan. The mullahs issued *fatwas* saying that those who did not go on *hijrat* would lose their right on their wives. Many women joined their husbands. Several thousands of the inhabitants of the Peshawar district went to Afghanistan, other districts of the province being also affected in a minor degree. In August 1920,

18,000 Pathans sold their lands, homes and shops and moved to Kabul. Abdul Ghaffar led a big party of *muhajarins*. His ninety-year old father was eager to join the party, but with great effort, he was persuaded to stay at home.

King Amanullah wanted to give cultivable land, employment and a share in trade to the emigrants, but being misled by spies, they insisted that they came for waging a holy war and not for work. "I have no strength to wage a war against the British, but I shall allot a colony to you," said Amanullah. "You generate strength in you to wage a war with the British. I shall extend all help to you, because the British are like a black cobra that does not allow me to rest in peace." He tried his best to help the emigrants in vain. The *hijrat* movement failed.

While in Kabul, Abdul Ghaffar had an interview with Amanullah, who knew several languages but not Pakhtu. When Abdul Ghaffar referred to the king's ignorance of his mother tongue and the national language of Afghanistan, it touched Amanullah Khan's heart and soon he learnt Pakhtu. Similarly, Abdul Ghaffar tried to make the Afghan ministers and the university students, with whom he had to converse in Persian, conscious that Pakhtu was their national language and every Afghan should learn it.

The horde of emigrants became embarrassing to King Amanullah. Abdul Ghaffar was convinced by him that it was futile to run away from one's country and seek shelter abroad. He retraced his steps. The disillusioned emigrants returned after a few months in a state of utter destitution. Some of Abdul Ghaffar's companions proceeded to Tashkent and he himself, with a few companions, reached Bajaur with the intention of establishing schools there among the independent tribes. In a village in Dir, a school was opened, and it attracted many students. The Political Agent sent for the Nawab of Dir and sternly ordered him to close the school. All the companions of Abdul Ghaffar forsook him. After visiting many places in Dir and Bajaur, he returned to Utmanzai and tried to restart those schools which the British had closed down during the first world war.

Abdul Ghaffar heard of the momentous session of the Congress held at Nagpur in December 1920. It was attended by over 14,000 delegates and addressed by stalwarts, including C. R. Das, Pandit Malaviya, Jinnah, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, the Ali brothers and Azad. The Congress now represented the masses and became a revolutionary body under the leadership of Gandhi. One of the first resolutions passed was on the aim of the Congress: "The object of the Congress is the attainment of swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means." Congress organization lost its loose character and developed

into modern party, with units reaching down to the villages, and with a standing executive of fifteen all-India leaders.

The previous Congress meeting held at Calcutta had enunciated the programme of non-co-operation. Gandhi resolved to give it a finishing touch at Nagpur and succeeded in enlisting support for the whole of his programme, of those very people who had opposed it partly at Calcutta. The ratification of the historic resolution on non-co-operation was acknowledged with the following preamble:

"Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country, and the people of India now are determined to establish swaraj, as all methods hitherto adopted by the people of India failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties and the redress of their many and grievous wrongs, more specially in reference to the Khilafat and the Punjab, now this Congress, while reaffirming the resolution on non-violent non-co-operation, declares that the entire or any part of the non-violent non-co-operation scheme, with the renunciation of the voluntary association with the Government at one end and the refusal to pay the taxes at the other, should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All-India Congress Committee, and that in the meanwhile, in order to prepare the country for it, effective steps should be taken in that behalf."

The goal of the Congress was discussed at length. In the constitution that Gandhi had prepared, the goal of the Congress was the attainment of swaraj within the British empire if possible, and without it if necessary. A party in the Congress, headed by Malaviya and Jinnah, wanted to limit the goal of swaraj within the British empire only. But they were able to get very few supporters.

The draft constitution provided that the means for the attainment of independence were to be peaceful and legitimate. Jinnah opposed this resolution, saying that it was neither logically or politically sound nor wise to place before the Congress the objective of "the attainment of swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means". He made bold to say that India would never get her independence without bloodshed, and as the country had neither the will nor the capacity to resort to violence, a declaration for unadulterated swaraj was a hasty step. He was unable to agree with the suggestion that the creed was made elastic so as to include not only those who advocated British connection but also those who wanted to destroy it. "Is it possible," he asked, "for us to stand on the same platform after this creed is passed, one saying that he wants to keep the British connection and another that he does not want it?" He wound up his arguments by an appeal to Gandhi to cry halt.

Abdul Ghaffar was greatly attracted to Gandhi and his programme but shyness and desire to keep in the background made him keep away from Gandhi. Hating fuss and too much talk, he looked forward to freedom of his Frontier people within the framework of Indian freedom. Action was necessary to achieve anything and Gandhi had proposed a remarkable way of peaceful action which appealed to him. The Congress at Nagpur was a significant political education for him. It was Jinnah's last appearance in a Congress session.

A Model Prisoner

1921–4

Soon after the historic Nagpur Congress session, in 1921 Abdul Ghaffar laid the foundation of constructive activity by establishing an Azad High School in his village, Utmanzai. Kazi Atatullah, Mian Ahmed Shah, Haji Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Khan Ahmed Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan, Taj Mohamed Khan, Abdullah Shah and Khadim Mohamed Akbar were on the staff of the school. There were not enough funds to pay the staff adequately, and trained teachers would not join on meagre salaries. Abdul Ghaffar also taught the students. The medium of instruction was Pakhtu. The tenets of Islam and the history of Pakhtuns and their civilization were taught along with other subjects. Weaving was introduced in the curriculum also. To carry on the educational work methodically he formed an association, 'Anjuman Islah-ul-Afaghina'. Its aims and objects were economic and social. It was non-political and purely missionary.

Along with the constructive work he participated in the Khilafat movement. In the public mind, the word "Khilafat" meant opposed to the British Government. Many of the new recruits who worked for the Congress lived in a kind of intoxication. The old feeling of fear, oppression and frustration had completely disappeared. There was a strange mixture of nationalism, religion and mysticism. Abdul Ghaffar went to Lahore to attend the Khilafat Conference and there he met Amir Mukhtar Khan from Bannu, accompanied by his two sons, Amir Mumtaz and Maksud Jan, who were studying in the B.A. class of the Islamia College at Peshawar. Both the brothers had left their college during the movement. Amir Mukhtar Khan made a gift of his sons to Abdul Ghaffar's school. Maksud Jan was the first headmaster of the Azad High School at Utmanzai. When he joined the college to continue his studies, his elder brother, Amir Mumtaz, replaced him as the headmaster of the school. The police tried to frighten the teachers who joined the Azad School, and when they failed, they tried to entice them by offering lucrative jobs. The new teachers were constantly harassed by the police.

Abdul Ghaffar was approached to accept the presidentship of the Khilafat Committee of Peshawar by the dissident groups within the organization, because he was acceptable to all. There were constant quarrels and no solid work was being done. Abdul Ghaffar accepted

the presidentship on the condition that all subscriptions collected in the Frontier Province by the Khilafat committee should be spent on educational activities. The spread of education was a passion with him and he bent his energies to make it a success. He started on a tour to renew his contacts with the people and to restart the defunct schools which had attracted children of the tribesmen from the contiguous areas of Malakand, Bajaur and Swat.

Abdul Ghaffar's activities alarmed the authorities. Objection was taken to his touring the districts. His school in Utmanzai was six months old, when the Chief Commissioner, Sir John Maffey, summoned Abdul Ghaffar's father and tried to persuade him to ask his son to close down the school. It was anti-British, said he to the old Khan. "Why should your son take it upon himself to establish this school, when none else is interested in it? Your son is visiting village after village and establishing schools. Ask him to stop this work and stay at home like others, otherwise you both will have to face the consequences."

Behram Khan was very fond of the British, who used to address him as chacha. "The British have come to us as angels, sent by God for our good," he used to say. He called aside his son and told him about the interview he had with the Chief Commissioner. He gently added: "What the others are not doing, you should not do. Sit comfortably at home."

Abdul Ghaffar felt embarrassed. "The British in their own interest create differences even between father and son," he thought and said to his deeply religious father: "Supposing all the other people ceased to take interest in the *namaz*, would you ask me to give it up and forsake my duty?"

"Certainly not," said the father. "I would never have you give up your religious duties, no matter what others may do."

"Well, then, father, this work of imparting national education is like that. If I may give up my *namaz*, I may give up the school. As *namaz* is a duty, so also the education and service of the people is a duty."

"I see," said the father, "you are right. If it is duty, then do it." Behram Khan told the Chief Commissioner that a religious duty cannot be given up by his son and boldly upheld his son's activities.

When Abdul Ghaffar pleaded with the rulers that education was no crime, that he was merely helping the Government, the rejoinder was: "But if you are allowed to organize the Pathans for social reform, what guarantee is there that this organization will not be used against the Government and its interest?"

" You must trust me," said Abdul Ghaffar.

"No," said the rulers. "You must apologize and give a security that you will not do it again."

"Give a security that I shall cease to love and serve my people?" he asked, for he had studied in a mission school and had many illusions about Christian justice and charity.

"This is not service, but rebellion," said the official.

Shortly, Abdul Ghaffar was arrested and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation on December 17, 1921. The suffering that he went through completed the baptism that had begun in 1919. It is a most moving story:

"A father and his son from my village were jailed at the same time. When they donned the jail clothes, the son could hardly recognize his father and cried, 'Baba, where have you gone?' 'Son,' said the father, 'I am standing near you.' And what about a man, tall and hefty like me? When I donned the jail clothes, the trousers hardly reached my calf and the shirt did not even reach the navel. And when I did my *namaz*, the trousers often got torn and the shirt clung to the ribs. A prisoner, as a rule, was lodged in a solitary cell and was made to grind twenty seers of corn on *chakki* every day. Fetters were put on a prisoner's feet and an iron ring round his neck, from which dangled an inscribed wooden token, giving the nature and duration of sentence. Our jailor was a Hindu, a sympathetic and honest man. He kept me in a solitary cell, but he did not make me grind *chakki*. He put no fetters on me. Although he gave me jail food, it was rather clean; dal and vegetables were palatable. Our cell faced the north; the sunlight never entered it. It was intensely cold. I was given three old blankets and a mat. They were quite inadequate and I felt most uncomfortable. I was confined in that cell, day and night. When a kind watchman was on duty, he sometimes took me out of the cell and allowed me to bask in the sun for half an hour or so. Even during the night I could not sleep undisturbed; every third hour the watchman on duty changed and, making noise, shouted at us. He would not proceed further until we woke up to respond to his call. And if a prisoner failed to respond promptly, he was punished the next day.

"When I was arrested and taken to the Peshawar jail, I was put in a solitary cell, instead of being lodged in a lock-up. When I entered the cell, it was stinking—the earthen sanitary pan there was full to the brim with faeces. I stepped out of the cell and told the officer that the stink was unbearable. He pushed me inside and locked the door.

"After my arrest the other Khilafat colleagues too were arrested. All the twenty-four hours we were confined to the solitary cells. Food was pushed through the bars. The door was opened only for the sweeper to clean the cell. The cells were guarded to prevent anyone communicating with us. This harsh treatment drove most of our colleagues to

furnish security. I was taken out of the cell after ten days and produced before the Deputy-Commissioner, a queer Englishman. My offence, according to the police, was that I went on *hijrat* to Afghanistan and had opened an Azad school. The Deputy-Commissioner repeatedly asked the police why they allowed me to return after the *hijrat*. I interrupted him saying, 'You have occupied our country and now want to bar us from entering it.' He was furious and ordered the police to take me away, adding that I was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

"Dr. Khan Sahib and some others came to visit me in jail. They had brought a message for me from the Government that I could conduct the schools but should stop touring.

"Among the prisoners were many so-called holy crusaders, who fought among themselves. One of them who knew the Holy Koran by heart, was won over by the police. He used to entice away good workers and hand them over to the police. The condition of the crusaders in jail was pitiable. After my arrival the situation changed for the better.

"Generally, the prisoners are kept in solitary cells for one week, but I was kept there for two months and then transferred to Dera Ismail Khan jail meant for habitual prisoners. I was brought here in fetters and they were removed when I was put in the cell. The following day I was given twenty seers of corn to grind. Luckily the corn was worm-eaten and was easy to grind. Here the jailor was an aged Muslim who was once a sepoy. He did not know English and was shortly to retire on pension. The Superintendent of Jail was an Englishman who knew only English. So all work was done by Gangaram, the deputy jailor, a veritable rogue. In order to extract bribes he made the prisoners fight among themselves and supplied young boys to the prisoners.

"While I was grinding, the Muslim jailor approached me and said, 'Don't grind. What shall I tell Allah if He asked me, why I made you, one man of God out of 1,400 prisoners in this jail, grind *chakki*?' To pacify him I stopped grinding *chakki*, but as soon as he left, I started it again. He kept standing outside the cell and observed me through the tiny hole in the door. He entered my cell again and asked me why I did the grinding. Just in front of me, a prisoner was grinding corn. I told the jailor that that prisoner was a murderer and was grinding *chakki* for his dirty crime. I argued that as mine was a holy mission, why should I not grind for the holy cause! The jailor ordered the man in charge of *chakki* to give me wheat flour, instead of wheat, to grind. The following day he brought wheat flour to me along with some corn to grind. He told me to tell a lie to the superintendent, otherwise he would be dismissed. 'I do not want you to lose your job,' I remarked, 'give me corn to grind. I cannot tell a lie.'

"The bread contained clay. It was difficult to munch it. The cooked vegetable was so unpalatable that even a hungry cat would not touch it. The jailor offered to send me food from his own house, but I did not agree to it. I would not accept milk, because it was not entered in my jail diet.

"Gangaram sent his agents to persuade me to offer bribe in order to get me out of the solitary cell. His agents told me that the Peshawaris felt greatly ashamed that I was lodged in the cell, grinding *chakki*, and they were prepared to give bribe to Gangaram on my behalf. Bribing is not desirable, I told them. Neither they nor I should give him bribe. 'If I have to give bribe, why not then furnish the security when I am a security prisoner?'

"One day while I was grinding corn the superintendent entered the cell. Pointing out to the cooked vegetable in a bowl, I told him: 'I put this before a cat but it would not touch it, and you give this to human beings!' The superintendent said, 'This vegetable is quite good.' Then I remarked: 'Look at the fetters of the prisoner kept in the opposite cell, and look at my fetters. He grinds twenty seers of corn and I too grind the same quantity. Like him I too am confined to a cell. Think of his crime. I wonder how you treat prisoners of my kind in your country!' He left me without uttering a word. The following day there was a change in my task, I was sent to a workshop to make envelopes. On his next visit the superintendent told me, 'Soon I shall remove you from this solitary cell.'

"In the workshop there were prisoners from the Frontier Province. They used to quarrel among themselves and fight over the boys. I tried to dissuade them from evil deeds.

"I told even the poor constables not to soil their hands with bribes. One of them confessed, 'I find it impossible otherwise to make both ends meet.' 'I will not tell you what you should do,' I said, 'but I may tell you that what you are doing is immoral.' He resigned.

"As Gangaram's earnings dwindled, he conspired to remove me. He complained to the superintendent that I was creating trouble in the workshop and he would not be able to maintain discipline among the prisoners if I was not removed. On questioning me the superintendent was convinced that Gangaram was lying. But an Englishman can be persuaded to do anything for the sake of maintaining discipline. So, I was removed to Dera Ghazi Khan prison, after having spent two months here and two months in the Peshawar jail.

"A police van, with screens drawn on all sides, parked near the jail gate. I was driven in that van to a railway station, with fetters round my ankles, handcuffs on my wrists, an iron ring round my neck, and

dressed in short, tight clothes. It was a queer sight even to myself, how queer it must be to others! We missed the train and passed the night at the station. I was not allowed to approach anybody, and none was allowed to approach me. The guards escorting me were Pathans. The sub-inspector, Nazir Khan, nicknamed a dacoit, hailed from my region. The next day, when the train arrived, I was put in the servants' compartment and none was allowed to come near me. When we reached Ghazi Ghat station, a Hindu officer, heading the guards, took me in his charge. He removed my handcuffs and said, 'Have a stroll.' While we were having a stroll, Nazir Khan approached the Hindu officer and exclaimed: 'What have you done? Oh, I am undone.' 'He is now in my custody,' said the Hindu officer. 'Be off, don't worry!'

"We embarked on a boat and crossed the Indus and then drove in a tonga to the Dera Ghazi Khan jail. My fetters were removed when I was taken inside the jail—a very pleasant experience for me. It was a small jail with two barracks, where political prisoners from the Punjab were lodged. I was lodged here with the 'C' class prisoners, because our province had only the lowest class for all prisoners. The superintendent was a decent Musalman.

"All the 'C' class prisoners were Hindus and Sikhs, and they respected me. We were given the task of rope-making, but I could not do it. I requested the jail superintendent to allot me some other work, and he asked me to spin. When the special class prisoners came to know about me, they persuaded the superintendent to transfer me to their barrack. It was indeed by the great grace of God that I was transferred to this jail, otherwise I might not have survived. Also here I got a unique opportunity of coming in close contact with the people of the Punjab and knowing each other's views and beliefs.

"Owing to the faulty diet in Dera Ismail Khan jail my teeth were badly affected. I lost 55 lb. in weight and developed scurvy and lumbago. The superintendent sent me to Lahore for treatment. My teeth were examined by Dr. Premnath in the jail office. He extracted a couple of teeth and cleaned the rest and told me that I was suffering from acute pyorrhea. He prescribed suitable diet and medicine. I told him that I was a man of means and, therefore, he should charge me the due fees. He declined. When I insisted, he remarked: 'You are jailed because of your love for the country. I cannot match your sacrifice, let me do this much.' He picked up his bag and went away.

"In the jail I had an opportunity to exchange views with Lala Lajpat Rai and other Congress and Khilafat workers. With Malik Lal Khan I studied the Holy Koran diligently, but soon he dropped out, accusing me of giving my own interpretation to the text. He was a blind follower

of tradition and had not the sufficient knowledge and intelligence to appreciate an independent interpretation.

"After some time I was sent back to Dera Ghazi Khan. In my barrack there were many Hindus and Sikhs and a few Musalmans. Gurdittmal was our respected teacher. He ended his prayers with '*shanti, shanti*', but he was not a man of peace. He used to lose his temper easily. When the Sikhs gathered together for prayers, they enthusiastically raised the slogan, '*Sir jawe, tan jawe, mera sikhiya dharam na jawe*', 'Let me lose my head, let my body perish, but not my Sikh faith.' This impressed me most. I concluded that the Sikhs were more spirited than the Hindus and the Muslims because their scripture, composed in their mother tongue, touched their hearts and revealed to them the true meaning of their religion and prayer. The Hindus and the Muslims do not understand the meaning of their prayers, because they are recited in Sanskrit and Arabic and not in their mother tongue.

"I read the Gita for the first time here and also the Granth Saheb and the Bible. I thought that this was the least that I owed to my companions. I would not be able to understand them properly and to value their friendship, if I did not know their scriptures. I must admit, however, that I found that the Gita was then beyond me. I read it over and over again. I had not then perhaps the intellectual equipment for it or, perhaps, the receptivity. It was Pandit Jagatram from the Andamans, who really taught me the Gita in 1930. He had a passion for it and he made me enter into its spirit.

"Once the Inspector-General of Prisons visited our jail. He was harsh and hostile towards the political prisoners. When he entered our barrack and noticed the Gandhi caps of the Hindu prisoners and the black turbans of the Sikhs, he reprimanded the jailor. 'Why have you permitted this?" he asked. Our superintendent, an Englishman, intervened: 'It is not the jailor's fault, it is my fault.' The Inspector-General left the barrack and ordered that the Gandhi caps and black turbans be removed. The jail superintendent read out the order to us. Sardar Kharak Singh pointed out that we were special-class prisoners and allowed by the rules to put on our own clothes. The superintendent remarked, 'I will enforce the Inspector-General's order.' When he left us, we all sat together and resolved to defy the order. The following day, one by one, the prisoners were taken to the jail office and forcibly relieved of their Gandhi caps and black turbans. We then resolved to wear only the loin cloth. I was permitted to put on my usual clothes, because only the Punjabis were involved in this tussle—the matter of the caps and the turbans did not have any sentimental significance in the North-West Frontier Province.

"Shortly, the Deputy-Commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan visited the jail. Sardar Kharak Singh put forth our claim with regard to the dress. The Deputy-Commissioner told him that the rule did not apply to caps and turbans. The Sardar insisted that the head-gear was a part of the dress, and slogans were raised. The Deputy-Commissioner was frightened by the cry and ran to the jail office and ordered that the prisoners be punished for raising slogans. The following day the superintendent ordered that the prisoners should put on the proper dress, otherwise they would be punished. The Muslim prisoners complied, but the Hindus and the Sikhs defied the order. The magistrate came to the jail and sentenced them individually to nine months' imprisonment.

"Among the Dera Ghazi Khan prisoners my sentence was the longest. A majority of prisoners serving the six-month term were released, and the rest would also have followed suit if the incident over clothes had not occurred. After the completion of the nine-month term, the superintendent again warned the prisoners: 'Put on the clothes, otherwise you will be charged again!' The Hindus and Muslims complied with the order, but the Sikhs were adamant and their term of imprisonment was further enhanced by nine months. Those who agreed to wear the proper clothes, requested the superintendent to transfer them to another jail. Their request was soon granted. After the completion of the additional nine month term, the Sikhs realized that they would be charged again. Their morale weakened and their request for their transfer to another jail was granted. Only Sardar Kharak Singh and I remained there. The Inspector-General of Prisons visited the jail again. Arrogantly he approached us in our barrack and addressing the Sardar said, 'Well, Kharak Singh!' He defiantly answered back, 'Well, what?' The Inspector-General was greatly enraged and ordered that Kharak Singh should be confined to a solitary cell and the supply of milk to him be discontinued. He was separated from me and locked up in a solitary cell in the jail hospital. I was left alone in the barrack, adjacent to the jail hospital. Through a hole in the door of the hospital barrack, we used to have a glimpse of each other. Kharak Singh had become very weak and at times I passed some food for him through the hole. He was a brave man, all the difficulties and miseries did not rob him of his fine sense of humour.

"Soon I was transferred to the Mianwali jail that had only solitary cells and no barracks. Several Congress, Khilafat and Guru-ka-Bagh prisoners were transferred here from Dera Ghazi Khan jail. They kept friendly relations with the jail staff. Great heat and storm prevailed in Mianwali, but the well-water in the jail was cool. Our jailor was a queer fellow, he used to take the prisoners to the well for bathing. After

the counting of prisoners in the evening, the jailor relaxed on the foundation of the watch-tower, and the political prisoners also squatted there with him. I declined to join them, because the jail officers who spend their lifetime with the prisoners develop a peculiar mentality; they think that a prisoner is a prisoner after all. Once, while the jailor and the political prisoners were relaxing, the jail doctor arrived there. No vacant chair was there and the jailor ordered the prisoners to vacate the chairs and go away. The insult deeply hurt me, but they were quite indifferent. The following day I found them waiting at the office door, pleading with the peon to get them permission from the jailor for an access to the cool spot. Once you compromise a principle, you not only compromise truth but also your self-respect.

"My release was shortly due, I was transferred to Peshawar. There they produced me before the Deputy-Commissioner, who ordered the police to take me to my village and release me there. They set me free near the Azad school at Utmanzai. It was the closing time of the school. When the children spotted me, they all rushed towards me. The people had planned to go up to the Attock Bridge to receive me on my release and to bring me back to my village on a horseback in a big procession. To checkmate the enthusiastic demonstration the Government released me earlier than expected."

Abdul Ghaffar suffered the tortures of solitary confinement, heavy chains on his hands and feet, dirt and filth and lice and hunger, and most of all, insults and kicks from the lowest and most loathsome of British lackeys. He was always a model prisoner. He was kind in spite of his strength and gentle even with his enemies. He forgave everything to everyone, and possessed unlimited patience. He treated his captors with sublime contempt.

On Haj

1924–8

WHEN Abdul Ghaffar came out of jail in 1924 he was frail and worn-out in body, but his spirit was unvanquished. His blue eyes were proud of their suffering, determined and cold. His old father, Behram Khan, was in high spirits; he poured out tea for hundreds of visitors and said some complimentary things about Englishmen. The Pathans looked at Abdul Ghaffar with admiration, they had found their leader, thanks to the British.

For three long years he was walled as in a tomb. He could send and receive only one letter in three months and meet the relatives once. During the interview he used to get some glimpse of the outside world. He heard that the movement had intensified throughout India. The Government resented the public meetings in the Frontier Province and the people were afraid of holding them. But the Azad school flourished and the association remained active; the teachers and students of his school used every occasion, such as the Maulud Sharif in mosques, for delivering speeches. Along with other students, Ghani, aged 9, made speeches. "Ask the Government why my father is imprisoned, what crime has he committed?" he used to say to the audience. His younger brother, Wali, recited the Koran effectively during these functions. The programmes proved effective, new life was infused in the people. "My imprisonment," observed Abdul Ghaffar, "greatly benefited the Pakhtuns. They became more sympathetic to our Azad school and they gave larger aid."

The news of his mother's death was withheld from him for over a year: "My mother was greatly disturbed by my arrest. Whenever I was allowed to write a letter, once in three months, I wrote to her. She was most keen on visiting me in jail, but she was very old and Dera Ghazi Khan was far away and the Indus lay between us. To spare her discomfort and trouble, I always entreated her not to come for the interview. But, alas, I did not know that the Almighty was soon to take her away from me! She fell ill in 1923 and passed away after a few days. No one informed me about her illness and death. It was concealed from me. I read about it in newspapers and felt greatly depressed. On my release, when I went to my village, my sister told me that my mother spoke of me when she breathed her last: 'Where is Ghaffare?' With my name on her lips she passed away."

His elder brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, was away from his people for thirteen years. After obtaining M.R.C.S. from St. Thomas' Hospital in London, he had gone to the front in France in utter ignorance of what was happening to his younger brother and his aged father. Not a letter from India reached him. While in England, he married for the second time an English wife, by whom he had a son, Jan. Jan Khan was educated at a public school and later at Oxford. During his long stay in England Dr. Khan Sahib had met Jawaharlal Nehru and the two became great friends. He tried to return home, but he had to wait for six months in London until he could get his embarkation orders in 1920. Thus, while his father, brother and other relations were in jail, he was serving the British in France and was deliberately kept by the authority in ignorance of the happenings at home. On his return to India in March 1920, he was posted with the Guides Regiment at Mardan. The facts, so far suppressed, came to light and they greatly distressed him. In 1921, his unit was ordered to proceed to Waziristan for action against the Waziris. Dr. Khan Sahib refused to go and work against his own brethren. With very great difficulty he could obtain permission to resign his commission as captain in the Indian Medical Service. Soon he established himself as a leading doctor in Peshawar. Whilst the elder brother settled down to practise medicine, the younger immersed himself more and more in constructive work and politics.

The annual gathering of the Azad school was postponed in anticipation of Abdul Ghaffar's release. When it took place, thousands of people were present, brimming with enthusiasm, admiration and love for the youthful leader. On behalf of the people Abdul Ghaffar was honoured with a medal of distinction and the title "Fakhr-e-Afghan", "Pride of the Pathans". In the gathering he made a short speech:

"Once a pregnant tigress attacked a herd of sheep and gave birth to a cub and died. The cub grew up among the sheep and adopted their ways and manners. Once a tiger attacked them and discovered that there in the herd of sheep was a tiger cub bleating while running away with the sheep. The tiger was amazed to hear a tiger cub bleating. The tiger separated the cub from the herd and dragged it to a pool in which it could see its own reflection and realize that it was a tiger and not a sheep. The tiger told the cub, 'You are a tiger and not a sheep, do not bleat but roar like a tiger!'

"You Pakhtuns are not sheep but tigers. You have been reared in slavery. Don't bleat, roar like a tiger!"

People's enthusiastic response to the speech annoyed the authorities. The atmosphere in the province was heartening and Abdul Ghaffar launched on an extensive tour.

Behram Khan, almost reaching a century, took ill in 1926 and died. He was active to the last and loved walking and horse-riding. Both the sons always remembered him for his boundless charity.

Many mullahs had flocked at the funeral of Behram Khan in expectation of ample alms. No alms were distributed and that greatly enraged them. At the time of the last rites at the grave they launched a tirade against Abdul Ghaffar, saying that his conduct was improper and harmful to the departed one. They feared that the others too might follow his example and their earnings would soon dwindle. Abdul Ghaffar addressed the gathering thus:

"The times have changed and we too must surely change. Formerly, the mullahs imparted religious instructions gratis, but now they receive remuneration for it. The old custom of giving alms must now change. I am not against giving alms. I want to give Rs. 2,000 in memory of my departed father. Shall I buy gur or soap for distribution among you or donate this money to the village school for the education of the Pakhtun children?"

The audience shouted, "Surely, give it to the school." The mullahs were greatly dejected. They always disliked him, now their opposition further stiffened.

The elder sister decided to go on *haj*, and at her request, Abdul Ghaffar, accompanied by his wife, joined her. The party embarked a steamer at Karachi and travelled as deck passengers, because no other accommodation was available. Most of the time, during the voyage, they suffered from sea-sickness. Abdul Ghaffar was down with influenza. An Arab passenger was kind enough to accommodate him in his cabin. Indeed, he saved his life. They disembarked at Jidda and were looked after by a priest guide. They had a lot of baggage with them and lost it through the negligence of the guide. Perhaps it was stolen by him. From Jidda they went to Mecca. It was summer, the days were warm and the nights cool. A large number of poor pilgrims fell ill and died due to extreme variations in the weather. This year, 1926, Sultan Ibn Saud of Arabia had invited distinguished Muslims from all over the world to Mecca and Abdul Ghaffar too participated in the conference along with some Indians. The discussion centred round trivial subjects, resulting in discord. He met several delegates from Muslim countries; they gave him an insight into the affairs of their homelands.

After the conclusion of *haj*, he and his wife proceeded to Taif, and his sister went to Medina, from where she returned home. At Taif, a picturesque and cool place, he convalesced in a comfortable house of a friendly Pakhtun, whom he came to know during the journey. One day, when he went out for a walk outside the town, a stranger with a

long beard and flowing robe, called him from a distance. When Abdul Ghaffar approached him, he said, "This is the spot where on a stone lie a hair of the Prophet's beard and his footprint." "I have not come here for these things," remarked Abdul Ghaffar. "I have come here to be reminded of the patience and courage of the Prophet, who, while coming from Mecca to this distant place, seventy-five miles away, for the welfare of the people of Taif, was stoned, chased by the dogs and beaten by the Taif people. Undismayed, the Prophet prayed, 'Allah, show my people the right path.' "

From Taif he went to Mecca, Jidda and then to Medina. The caravan consisted of four women and six men. They rode on camels through the desert during the nights. After spending a few days in Medina they went to Jerusalem, where Abdul Ghaffar's wife slipped from a staircase and died. She left behind one daughter and a son. He felt her loss intensely. He did not marry again, though he was young.

He spent a few days in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq to study the conditions there. After a brief stay in Baghdad he went to Basra and then to Karachi by steamer. From there he proceeded to his village, seized with the spirit to serve his country and his people.

His tour in the Muslim countries opened his eyes to the great things happening around. He had noticed how the pan-Islamic idea was replaced by robust nationalism. He had noticed how the Khilafat regime had been abolished in Turkey and a dynamic republic arose under the progressive leadership of Kemal Ataturk. Egypt, Iran and Arabia were being moulded by nationalist leaders like Zaghlul Pasha, Reza Shah and Ibn Saud. It was widely felt that the emancipation of India would also lead to the freedom of the people in the Middle East and elsewhere, from British domination.

The period between 1924 and 1929 was a hard testing time in the struggle for independence. The communal passions mounted high and many lost their moorings. Abdul Ghaffar kept himself severely aloof from all activities of a narrow communal type and refused to be drawn into the surging communal passion. "I do not measure the strength of a religion by counting heads," he stated. "For what is faith until it is expressed in one's life? It is my inmost conviction that Islam is *amal*, *yakeen*, *muhabat*—right conduct, faith and love—and without these, one calling himself a Muslim is like a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. The Holy Koran makes it absolutely clear that faith in one God without a second and good works, are enough to secure a man salvation."

A wave of communal riots swept over the country. There were terrible riots at Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province in September 1924. The entire Hindu population evacuated Kohat. The immediate

cause of the trouble was a publication of a scurrilous life of the Prophet, *Rangila Rasul*: its Hindu author was eventually murdered. Gandhi imposed on himself twenty-one days' fast at Mahomed Ali's residence at Delhi. Over the Kohat riots and other issues there arose fundamental differences between Gandhi and the Ali brothers, and they drifted apart. The appeal to communal sentiment during the general election campaign in 1926 left a trail of bitter memories. The Hindus resorted to *shuddhi* and *sangathan*, and the Muslims vied with them. Communal differences deepened and led to much bloodshed. In December 1926 Swami Shraddhanand, the hero of non-co-operation days, was assassinated by a Muslim. "The sword is too much in evidence among the Musalmans," said Gandhi. "It must be sheathed if Islam is to be what it means—peace." In 1927 Gandhi said: "I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands, and it has been transferred to God's hands alone. We hate one another, we distrust one another, we fly at one another's throat, and even become assassins. Let us ask God in all humility to give us sense, to give us wisdom."

Abdul Ghaffar preached Hindu-Muslim unity. "Oh, what a vain attempt!" exclaimed a Muslim divine. "Hindus are idol-worshippers. How can we have any dealings with them?" Abdul Ghaffar remonstrated: "If they are idol-worshippers, what are we? What is this worship of tombs? How are they any the less devotees of God when I know that they believe in one God? And why do you despair of Hindu-Muslim unity? No true effort goes in vain. Look at the fields over there. The grain sown therein has to remain in the earth for a certain time, then it sprouts, and in due time yields hundreds of its kind. The same is the case about every effort in a good cause."

Pakhtun

1928

Soon after his return from the *haj*, Abdul Ghaffar undertook long and arduous tours on foot to carry to the Pakhtuns the message of social and political reforms. Ninety-eight per cent of the Pathans were illiterate, a written piece of paper meant nothing to them, so he went from village to village talking to them.

In the awakening of the Pakhtun masses he wanted the co-operation of all Pakhtu-speaking people. There are over ten million Pakhtuns, including those staying in the North-West Frontier Province, the tribal territories and Afghanistan. They are spread also in many cities all over the world. They man coastal vessels between obscure Indian Ocean ports, they are employed as police officers in East Bengal, they work in the docks of Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi and London, they guard the houses and shops in many cities, they are spread in the villages of India, doing money-lending business. There are Pathans throughout South-East Asia. There is a Pathan colony in Australia. Some of the most prosperous farmers in California are Pathans. To reach the Pakhtun community throughout the world and especially the literates in the North-West Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar thought of publishing a Pakhtu journal.

"The Pakhtuns then had no love for their own language," observes Abdul Ghaffar. "They were not even conscious that Pakhtu was their language, and wherever they went, they adopted the local language and forgot their mother tongue. They did not teach their language to others and did not care to read and write in Pakhtu. Leave aside the illiterates, when I appealed to the educated Pakhtuns to subscribe for and read a Pakhtu journal for the Pakhtuns, they remarked, 'What is there in Pakhtu worth reading and learning?' 'Surely,' I asserted, 'it is not the fault of the Pakhtu language. All the existing languages of the other countries were once undeveloped. Men of calibre and dedication nurtured their own languages and raised them to great heights. Has any of us ever made an effort to nurture and to develop the Pakhtu language? On the contrary, the mullahs propagated that Pakhtu was the language of hell, spoken by the people in hell. The Pakhtun community was so ignorant that they did not ask the mullahs, how they got this information and when did they come out of hell.' In such circumstances the journal, *Pakhtun*, was born, and in a short time it became

popular not only in the land of Pakhtuns but all over the world where a Pakhtun lived. The Pakhtuns living in America not only gave the biggest help in its circulation, but they helped it financially."

There was no political journal in the Pakhtu language till 1928. The Urdu and English newspapers published in the Punjab were circulated in the North-West Frontier Province. *The Civil and Military Gazette* in English and the *Zamindar* in Urdu were mostly read by the Frontier people. Abdul Ghaffar was a regular reader of the newspapers and he treasured Maulana Azad's *Al Hilal* and *Al Balagh* and Gandhi's *Young India*. In May 1928 he started the *Pakhtun*, a monthly journal in Pakhtu, under his editorship. His articles appeared under the signature: "Abdul Ghaffar". Its yearly subscription rate was Rs. 4, and it was offered to the students for only two and a half rupees. The journal was of medium octavo size, with forty-four pages. It was printed first in Rawalpindi, then in Amritsar and later at Peshawar. On the title-page of the first few issues was printed a sketch of a mosque framed between two flags, a crescent and a star. Underneath appeared a short poem by Khadim: "Years of a slave in servitude are nothing as compared with a single hour of freedom spent even in agonies of death." Subsequently, the title-page carried only a crescent and a star and Ghani's touching lines:

> If I a slave, lie buried in a grave, under a resplendent tomb-stone,
> Respect it not, spit on it.
> When I die, and not lie bathed in martyr's blood,
> None should his tongue pollute, offering prayers for me.
> O mother, with what face will you wail for me,
> If I am not torn to pieces by British guns?
> Either I turn this wretched land of mine into a garden of Eden
> Or I wipe out the lanes and homes of Pakhtuns!

"The patronage and prosperity of the *Pakhtun* should be a matter of prestige with the Pakhtuns," said a short note. "As it is issued for the Pakhtuns, we have decided that the profits from this publication should be utilized for national activities. More the sales, more the profits. We appeal to the Pakhtuns to make the publication a success."

The first issue covered over twenty-five topics in prose and verse. An opening note said: "The wrong notion prevails that to give proper expression to one's ideas in Pakhtu is difficult. The following couplets are worth reading. The reader would then realize how effectively one can express one's thoughts in the Pakhtu language."

The editorial said: "The news about the publication of the *Pakhtun* has already reached most of the Pakhtu-speaking areas. The enthusiastic response from the Pakhtuns is evident from the number of articles

received so far. It seems that the people were anxiously waiting for a Pakhtu publication. We feel confident that the *Pakhtun* will make rapid progress. The generous response is a clear proof of the resurgence of the people's spirit. This is their journal and they will be responsible for its progress and its prestige. We shall welcome a worth-while contribution from any one. The language must be simple. The prestige of the paper depends upon its contents. The first duty of our journal will be to voice boldly the aspirations of the Pakhtuns and to warn them of impending dangers. This is not the time to keep mum. Life is expressed through movement, and nature emphasizes action and not words. We should act, and not indulge in loose talk. Gone are the days of unprincipled writings and speeches. To succeed, we must struggle hard.

"The Pakhtuns, including those in Afghanistan, form one nation. It is unfortunate that in Afghanistan there is no journal published in Pakhtu, the language of all Pakhtuns. For the benefit of Pakhtuns, the *Pakhtun* is published. It is impossible to contact each and every person and explain to him one's point of view, but through the medium of a journal it is possible to speak to thousands of readers. And that is why more advanced a nation is, the more journals of quality it possesses. Quality journals are not produced overnight. Some of the renowned journals are a couple of centuries old, for example, *The Times* of London, which was first published in 1785. We have not yet realized the importance of newspapers. Let us shoulder the responsibility of the *Pakhtun* with patience and courage. We are sorry to say that we are disappointed with our Afghan brethren. It is a Pakhtun nation by language, traditions and customs, but their state language is Persian. We fervently hope that they will give serious thought to it. Let us pray for the progress of the Pakhtun people and their only journal the *Pakhtun*."

The *Pakhtun* contained well-written articles on political topics, such as the threat to tribal territory, the boycott of the Simon Commission, the importance of the visit of King Amanullah to European countries and the Soviet Union. There were notes on hygiene, and on the cure of diseases of plants. A complaint from a student about the paucity of accommodation in a government institution in Charsadda was also published. In a short article, a Pathan woman lamented over the illiteracy among her sisters and held men responsible for this criminal neglect. Nagina, a Pakhtun sister, composed a sarcastic ode on how a Pathan loves his own freedom, but denies it to his womenfolk. "Except the Pakhtun the women have no enemy. He is clever but is ardent in suppressing women. Our hands, feet and brains are kept in a state of coma. By force the Pakhtun has suppressed us. For no other animal in the world such severe laws have been framed. O Pakhtun, when you

demand your freedom, why you deny it to women? If you want us to do national work, then dispel our darkness with education. A satanic ordinance is imposed on us. It is a sin to sympathize with us, for only yesterday, King Amanullah Khan was declared a kafir for championing our cause!"

"In whatever role the actor, Amanullah Khan, might be, he would teach Pakhtuns the lesson of bravery and courage," said a contributor in rhymes. In an article on the royal visit of Amanullah to Europe, referring to the queen's dress, another writer said: "In the Pakhtun land, whose beautiful daughters gather fuel in the hills and carry it on their heads, reap the harvest and walk through the battlefield, there is no place for the purdah. The purdah did not exist in the past, it does not exist today, and it will never be there in the future. How can the queen of such a nation, whose brave daughters face the volley of bullets, take to purdah? If, on this question, some one raises an objection in this world, it can only be an Indian Muslim. The purdah system prevalent in India can never be called Islamic purdah. Islam could never permit such a harmful system, amounting to slavery. Islam does not debar women doing manual work. This postulates freedom of movement."

In an article entitled "Islam and the Frontier Pathans," an anonymous author observed: "One wonders why a Muslim and above all a Pakhtun is leading a life of degradation and humiliation in comparison to people of other nations! The Pakhtuns of the Frontier, though they claim to be the followers of Islam and consider their Islam to be better than that of the rest of the world, and possess most of the qualities essential for a live nation, are backward in many respects. Allah has promised that whosoever possesses faith and acts, will be entitled to His blessings. We must examine why we are downtrodden, why we lag behind other nations. We must search within in the light of Islamic teachings.

"God has said: 'Don't lie, don't slay, don't steal, don't strike, don't practise tyranny, don't grab other's property, do good, don't do evil, keep your body, your clothes and your place clean. Treat not others in a way you do not like to be treated. Perform such acts and adopt such attitudes towards others, which you like to be adopted towards you. These are the Islamic laws and orders which the Koran commends. These are the principles of Islam and those who follow them are true Muslims. But when one lies, steals, strikes, slays, grabs other's property, indulges in cruelty, always looks for mischief and is an enemy of peace, how can one claim to be a Muslim in the real sense of the word?' It is our misfortune that we are fully aware of the Islamic laws and the commandments of the Almighty, yet we do whatever we like. Through

our journal we shall try to bring home to every Pakhtun the real commandments of Islam, the spirit of the Koran, and the correct path shown by Allah and His Prophet. Every Pakhtun should follow Islam in the right spirit and be worthy of the promise made to him by the Almighty. Thus, he should be able to achieve all the benefits of this and the other world."

The *Pakhtun* also contained sketches of illustrious sons of Islam and short stories with social themes. The most striking feature of the journal was the verses composed by the enthusiastic readers—men and women and school children. Ghani contributed titbits in prose and verse. The following lines are a specimen:

> Oh, the groom is tall as the pine
> And the bride is a bower of roses,
> On her head is a golden shawl,
> On her chin is a beauty spot;
> She is dressed in clothes, old and torn.
> Oh, the flower garden in a ruined town.
> Oh, the boy is like the poplar
> And the girl is a bower of roses.

> When silence is overcome by love, it turns into a song.
> When a song becomes obstinate, it turns into noise.
> When a thought is sure of itself, it turns into a word.
> When a word feels like dancing, it turns into music.
> When music goes a-dreaming, it turns into silence.
> Silence is the beginning, silence the end.

> The biggest fool in the world is also the biggest saint.
> It is easy to cheat him because he knows not how to cheat.
> It is easy to lie to him because he knows not how to lie.
> He would lose a great opportunity just to see
> if he dared and laugh at death just to spite it.
> He is insolent to the strong and kind to the weak.
> He loves his brother and is honest with his wife.
> He is the greatest fool in the world.
> He prefers flowers to potatoes, and vagabonds to dull kings.
> He likes to live for a dream and not for a royal banquet.
> He would rather think than eat,
> He would rather dance than think,
> He would rather sleep and snore
> than sit up and be polite to his rich mother-in-law.
> He would rather console the little fragile heart of a child
> than sit up and soothe the pride of the proud and powerful.
> He would rather be the great friend of a small dog
> than the small friend of a great man.
> He likes to talk of fairies and grasshoppers
> and prefers the gold in the moon to the gold in your pocket,
> He is the biggest fool in the world.

The *Pakhtun* continued as a monthly journal till it was banned in April 1930, when Abdul Ghaffar was jailed. A year later, when he was released, it appeared again. Soon it was banned when Abdul Ghaffar was jailed in 1931. For years he was not allowed to enter his province. The *Pakhtun* appeared thrice in a month when he entered the Frontier Province in 1937. Except for one year, 1940, it was issued till October 1942, when Abdul Ghaffar was arrested. Soon after his release in 1945, the journal was published and continued till August 1947, when it was banned permanently by the Pakistan Government and all the available issues were destroyed. No library or individual in the world, probably, possesses the complete file of *Pakhtun*. The Kabul Library, perhaps, is the only place where some issues are to be found.

The British Government scrutinized the issues of the *Pakhtun* only to prosecute its editor. Some of the contents, only in English translation, are to be found in the National Archive at New Delhi. Probably, this historic treasure is lost for ever.

During the reign of Amanullah, *Pakhtun* was popular in Afghanistan. *Pakhtun* created love and appreciation for the Pakhtu language and led to the publication of the *Pakhtun Jagh* in Afghanistan, under royal patronage. King Amanullah was so enamoured of the Pakhtu language that he ordered that all government servants should learn it within three years. He wanted to make it a national language.

"The British prevented the progress of this movement suddenly," writes Abdul Ghaffar. "By the time the nine issues of the *Pakhtun Jagh* were out, the British, with the help of the mullahs, divines and priests, created disturbances in Afghanistan. They declared King Amanullah a kafir and forced him to leave his beloved land."

The mind and face of the Pakhtuns was mirrored in this unique journal. It is epitomized by Iqbal thus: "Three of their most striking qualities are deep religious spirit, complete freedom from distinctions of birth and rank, and the perfect balance between their religious and national ideals. The Afghan conservatism is a miracle: it is adamantine, yet fully sensitive to and assimilative of new cultural forces. And this is the secret of the eternal organic growth of the Afghan type."

Khudai Khidmatgar

1929

In December 1928 Abdul Ghaffar, with some of his colleagues, went to Calcutta to attend a Khilafat conference. It revealed a serious rift between the Ali brothers and the Punjabi leaders. During a night session a Punjabi leader violently criticized Maulana Mahomed Ali, who was sitting next to Abdul Ghaffar on the dais. He could not put up with it, he lost his temper and hurled abuses at the Punjabi speaker. Another Punjabi leader, who too was sitting on the dais, suddenly stood up, flashed a knife and reviled Maulana Mahomed Ali. There was uproar on the platform. Abdul Ghaffar's colleagues intervened and rescued Mahomed Ali.

The Congress session was being held simultaneously in Calcutta. In his presidential address at the Khilafat Conference, Mahomed Ali had attacked the Hindus, ridiculing their civilization, culture, customs and manners. It was an unpleasant experience for Abdul Ghaffar and he decided to attend the Congress session. It was a novel experience for him: "The Subjects Committee meeting was being addressed by Gandhiji and a haughty youth interrupted him repeatedly with critical remarks. Gandhiji did not lose his temper, he roared with laughter and continued his speech. I was greatly impressed and, on return to my camp, I narrated this experience to my companions. I also drew their attention to composure of Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Hindus, that stood in contrast to the behaviour of our Muslim leader, Maulana Mahomed Ali.

"Some of us had a discussion with Mahomed Ali. I narrated to him how Gandhiji, in spite of the interruptions and criticism, delivered his speech in good humour, unperturbed: 'You are our leader,' I said to Mahomed Ali, 'and we wish you to grow in stature. How nice it would be if you cultivate some tolerance and self-restraint!' He flared up and said: 'Oh, wild Pathans have come to teach Mahomed Ali.' He left the place in a huff. We were hurt at his behaviour. I did not attend the Khilafat session any more and went back to my village."

After Amanullah's fall in 1928, power came into the hands of a freebooter, known as Bacha-i-Saquao, and Nadir Khan had come from France in an attempt to recover the throne for the Muhammadzais. He and his brothers were acting in concert, and it was widely assumed that they were acting on Amanullah's behalf. Nadir, like Amanullah,

was a Muhammadzai. Mahsuds and Waziris formed the spear-head of Nadir Khan's advance; it was they who took Kabul for him and made it possible for the Durrani dynasty to be restored.

Commenting on these events, Abdul Ghaffar writes: "Amanullah Khan worked for the welfare and prosperity of the Pakhtuns. But they rose in rebellion, unable to distinguish between a friend and a foe, and banished him from his country. This was sheer ingratitude. Ingratitude is a great crime in the eyes of God who, therefore, punished them by thrusting Bacha-i-Saquao on them. Progress and prosperity of the country and community came to a halt and they headed towards disaster. We, the Pakhtuns, considered the ruination of Afghanistan as our own. The British ruined Afghanistan on our account, because the prosperity of Afghanistan would have affected us. And this the British did not want. We did our best, with men and money, to help Afghanistan and continued to do so till Nadir Khan triumphed. At the time of chaos I toured extensively to plead the cause of Afghanistan. In the Punjab I met Iqbal and some leaders. The Khilafat colleagues asked me: 'Why did you meet Iqbal? He is a worthless fellow, he only writes couplets.' After his death everybody praised him. It is a common practice in the world that living nations honour living persons and decadent nations honour the dead. We, Muslims, always honour the dead and have no appreciation of the living.

"From Lahore I went to Lucknow, where a Congress meeting was being held in 1929. Here for the first time I met Gandhiji and Jawaharlalji. I was not acquainted with them, but Jawaharlalji had intimate relations with Dr. Khan Sahib. They were in England together and studied in the London University. My brother had given me a letter of introduction to Jawaharlalji. I discussed Afghanistan affairs at length with Jawaharlalji.

"Then I went to Delhi. One Friday I met Mahomed Ali in a mosque. He was a decent man and very kind to me. His brother, Shaukat Ali, was not a desirable person and he misled his brother, especially, on the question of Afghanistan. On that account I was annoyed with him and avoided meeting him. When he sighted me, he approached me with a smile and said, 'We don't care for the Pathans.' I retorted, 'We too do not care for such leaders who are misled by others. Please, remember that you are saying the same things about Amanullah as the Britishers.' Embracing me warmly he said, 'Brother, tell me the facts.' He then took me to his house.

"On the eve of Amanullah's departure to Europe, Shaukat Ali had arranged a grand reception and presented him with a welcome address. I was present on that occasion. It is alleged that Shaukat Ali did not

receive the amount of money he expected from Amanullah Khan and was, therefore, displeased with him.

"A few days later, I received a telegram from Nadir Khan about his conquest of Kabul. We celebrated the happy occasion by taking out two impressive processions from the northern and the southern points of Hashtanagar. They converged at Utmanzai, where we held a mammoth meeting. I told the audience that there are only two means by which a nation progresses: religion and patriotism. Though America and Europe have neglected religion, they are full of national spirit. They have prospered. The cause of our degradation is that we are lacking in national and religious spirit. A great revolution is in the offing, but you are not even aware of it. During my recent visit to the subcontinent, I noticed that men and women were fully prepared to serve the nation. Leave aside women, even our men are not aware of the interests of the country and community. The revolution is like a flood. A nation can prosper thereby and can perish as well. A nation that is wide awake, that cultivates brotherhood, comradely feelings and national spirit, is sure to benefit through revolution. A nation that lacks these qualities, is swept away by the flood. You are mistaken if you think that a prosperous nation drops from heaven. A nation progresses that produces people who deny themselves leisure and comfort and stake their social status and future prospects for the advancement of their nation. We have not such men among us, and, therefore, we are backward. Those who march forward, know that their real prosperity lies in the progress of their nation. We look only to our self-interest and let the country go to the devil. We fail to understand that our individual prosperity does not lead to the national prosperity. When a nation prospers, every citizen benefits thereby. We look only to our own personal gain. A concern for isolated existence is the way of the beasts. The animals create their own shelters, choose their mates and rear their progeny. How are we superior beings if we do the same? If you want the progress and prosperity of your country, you should lead a community life instead of an individual existence.

"I have heard that Amanullah Khan used to say, 'I am the revolutionary king of the Pakhtuns.' In fact, it was he who had infused the revolutionary spirit in us. And, indeed, we have benefited more from it than the Afghans themselves—because they were sleeping, we were wide awake.

"The meeting had a great impact on the audience. The following day a young man visited me and said that he wanted to found an organization to serve the Pakhtun community and bring about reforms. We held discussions and consultations over it. We already had an organization,

'Anjuman-Islah-ul-Afaghina'. It was working for the spread of education and we decided that it should continue to do this very important work. To remove the other social drawbacks from our backward community, we founded another organization, 'Khudai Khidmatgar,' the 'Servants of God'. At first it was a completely non-political organization, but the British policy of oppression compelled it to participate in politics. It is a paradox that the British were instrumental in bringing us and the Congress together.

"Among us prevailed family feuds, intrigues, enmities, evil customs, quarrels and riots. Whatever the Pakhtuns earned was squandered on harmful customs and practices and on litigations. Underfed and underclothed, Pakhtuns led a miserable life. Nor were we prosperous traders or good agriculturists. After prolonged exchange of views, in September 1929, we succeeded in forming the 'Khudai Khidmatgar' organization. We called it so, in order to fulfil a particular purpose; we wanted to infuse among the Pakhtuns the spirit and consciousness for the service of our community and country in the name of God. We were wanting in that spirit. The Pakhtuns believed in violence and that too not against aliens but their own brethren. The near and dear ones were the victims of violence. The intrigues and dissensions tore them asunder. Another great drawback was the spirit of vengeance and lack of character and good habits among them.

"One who aspired to become a Khudai Khidmatgar, declared on solemn oath: 'I am a Khudai Khidmatgar, and as God needs no service I shall serve Him by serving His creatures selflessly. I shall never use violence, I shall not retaliate or take revenge, and I shall forgive anyone who indulges in oppression and excesses against me. I shall not be a party to any intrigue, family feuds and enmity, and I shall treat every Pakhtun as my brother and comrade. I shall give up evil customs and practices. I shall lead a simple life, do good and refrain from wrongdoing. I shall develop good character and cultivate good habits. I shall not lead an idle life. I shall expect no reward for my services. I shall be fearless and be prepared for any sacrifice.'"

This is the story of the birth of Khudai Khidmatgars, Servants of God, in the words of its founder.

Abdul Ghaffar went from village to village talking to the Pakhtuns. His companions found that their white clothes got easily dirty. So they decided to colour them. One of them took his shirt, trousers and turban to a local tannery and dipped them in the solution of pine bark prepared for hides. The result was a dark, brown red. The others did the same. When next the group went out, the unusual colour attracted the eye at once. The people left their ploughs in the fields and came to have a

look at the red-clad men. They came, saw and were conquered. Abdul Ghaffar adopted the red colour for his workers, Khudai Khidmatgars, and that is why they were known as the Red Shirts also. Their aim was freedom, their motive service. On the march they sang:

> We are the army of God,
> By death or wealth unmoved.
> We march, our leader and we,
> Ready to die.
>
> We serve and we love
> Our people and our cause,
> Freedom is our goal,
> Our lives the price we pay.

This remarkable institution, unique in many respects, bears testimony to Abdul Ghaffar's genius for organizing his people. He set up a network of committees of the local people, called jirgas, in every village. Then there were the committees, for a cluster of villages, called *tappa* committees. Next came the tahsil and district committees. Above all there was the Provincial Jirga, or the unofficial parliament of the Pakhtuns. All these committees were elected bodies. In the volunteer organization, however, the system of election was not introduced, because here the discipline mattered most; and to avoid factious feeling, Abdul Ghaffar himself nominated the Salar-e-Azam or the Commander-in-Chief of the Khudai Khidmatgars. This officer, in turn, appointed officers who were placed in charge of different units. All such officers and men rendered free service, and paid even for their uniforms. These volunteers were always the greatest source of strength to the organization, they formed the spear-head of the movement and carried out its decrees. They were pledged to free and selfless service and to cheerfully make the greatest sacrifice that occasion demanded. The volunteers had their own flags: red in the beginning, later tricolour—and bands: bagpipe and drums. The men wore red uniforms and the women black. They maintained order at public meetings. They helped villagers in their need. They were regularly drilled and taught to take long marches in military fashion. But they bore no arms, carried no weapons, not even a lathi.

The Khudai Khidmatgar movement aimed at teaching the Pakhtuns industry, economy and self-reliance, by inculcating in them self-respect and the fear of God which "banishes all fear".

Freedom's Call

1929–31

JUST prior to the Lahore Congress, a final attempt was made to find out some basis of agreement between the Congress and the Government. An interview was fixed for December 23, 1929. And on that day, while Lord Irwin was returning to Delhi, a bomb explosion took place on the railway line. But he escaped unhurt. Immediately after the Viceroy's return to Delhi, Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhai Patel, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Jinnah met him. After a prolonged conversation regarding the bomb explosion, the Viceroy inquired: "How shall we start? Shall we take up the question of the release of the prisoners?" Gandhi put the decisive question: Would the proposed Round Table Conference proceed on the basis of full dominion status? Lord Irwin could not give this assurance. On this negative note, the talk ended.

"We are now entering upon a new era," said Gandhi. "Our immediate objective and not our distant goal is complete independence. Is it not then obvious that if we are to evolve the true spirit of independence amongst the millions, we shall only do so through non-violence and all it implies? It is not enough that we drive out Englishmen by making their lives insecure through secret violence. That would lead not to independence, but to utter confusion. We can establish independence only by adjusting our differences through an appeal to the head and the heart, by evolving organic unity amongst ourselves, not by terrorizing and killing those who, we fancy, may impede our march, but by patient and gentle handling, by converting the opponent, we want to offer mass civil disobedience."

When the Congress met on the banks of the Ravi, on the outskirts of Lahore, during the Christmas week, 1929, the atmosphere was tense. Among 30,000 spectators and delegates there was a large number from the North-West Frontier Province led by Abdul Ghaffar, who had been for some years past attending the Congress sessions. The Ali brothers had since 1924 drifted farther and farther away from the Congress, and though they attended the Lahore Congress, they had done so only to warn Gandhi that the Muslims would not co-operate with the Congress in its campaign of civil disobedience. Dr. Ansari and the other Muslim leaders were with the Congress, but were afraid of the consequences and, therefore, far from enthusiastic. But Maulana Azad threw his whole weight on the side of the Congress and he had no doubt that the Muslim

masses in general would respond to the freedom's call. Abdul Ghaffar resigned from the Khilafat Committee, because that body had become anti-Congress.

Motilal Nehru handed over charge of the Congress presidentship to his son, Jawaharlal Nehru, who rode to the pandal on horseback; thousands and thousands of people thronged the long route and showered flowers. In his presidential address he declared himself a socialist and a republican: "Independence for us means complete freedom from the British domination and British imperialism. Having attained our freedom, I have no doubt that India will welcome all attempts at world co-operation and federation, and will even agree to give up part of her own independence to a larger group of which she is a member. Civilization has had enough of narrow nationalism and gropes towards a wider co-operation and interdependence."

Having been responsible for postponing the demand for independence at the previous Congress session at Calcutta in 1928, Gandhi sponsored the historic resolution, which *inter alia* declared that the word swaraj in the first article of the Congress constitution shall mean Purna Swaraj, Complete Independence. The operative portion of the resolution said: "That nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. As a preliminary step towards organizing a campaign of independence and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of creed, the Congress resolves upon complete boycott of the legislatures and the committees constituted by the Government and calls upon the Congressmen and the others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating in the future elections and directs the present members to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress and authorizes the All-India Congress Committee, wherever it deems fit, to launch upon the programme of civil disobedience including the non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

Gandhi characterized this resolution as the root of the future Congress work. At the stroke of midnight on December 31, 1929, the resolution was declared carried, and as 1930 ushered in, the flag of Indian independence, the Tricolour, was unfurled, to the deafening shouts of "Inquilab Zindabad", "Long live Revolution". The Frontier volunteers danced with joy and Jawaharlal Nehru participated, having donned the Pathan turban. He and his wife, Kamala, joined sumptuous feast given by the Frontier people.

The Lahore Congress session was attended by a few hundred people

from the Frontier Province. Individual delegates from the province had always come to the Congress sessions, but in Lahore, for the first time, a large batch of earnest young men from the Frontier came in touch with all-India political currents. Their fresh minds were impressed, and they returned home with a sense of unity with the rest of India in the struggle for freedom and full of enthusiasm for it. They were simple but effective men of action, less given to talk and quibbling than the people of the other provinces and they started organizing their people and spreading the new ideas. Abdul Ghaffar accompanied by Khudai Khidmatgars, walked from village to village, or rode on horseback, addressing the people in simple effective Pakhtu. He would remind them of their great past and the remarkable part they had played in the history of Central Asia and India. He would tell them that they were bold and courageous, not afraid of death, and yet they were slaves. He would plead with them to give up their blood feuds, educate their boys and girls, be kind to their women, reduce the marriage expenses, oppose all the oppressors, and always stand up for the oppressed. He walked several times from one end of the province to the other, talking to his people as no one had ever talked to them before. There are about three thousand villages in the province, and there was practically no village that he did not visit. Young men flocked to his standard, put on red uniforms, pledged themselves to absolute obedience to all just orders of their leader. The organization of the movement was military in character and a high level of discipline was maintained. They took the solemn pledge to be loyal to God, the community and the motherland. They were all pledged to non-violence. The rifle, the revolver, the sword — so dear to the Pathan — were rejected. They bound themselves to observe purity in their personal life and abjured communalism. A member of any community could join the organization. These volunteer workers were at first intended entirely for social reform—to stop drinking, to promote honesty and unity, to encourage khadi, to prevent feuds and to serve humanity, irrespective of any religious or other prejudices. It was after the Lahore Congress that Abdul Ghaffar decided to turn the small body of workers into a full-fledged organization to carry out the programme of the Congress. Up till April 1930, the Khudai Khidmatgars did not number more than 500. But then within six months they numbered over 50,000. The movement rapidly spread and reached the tribal territory. It became so popular that to whichever village Abdul Ghaffar went, he found that jirgas had been already formed and Khudai Khidmatgars were doing their work.

On the eve of the first Independence Day, January 26, 1930, Gandhi observed: "We are so very much fear-stricken that a severance of the

British connection means to us violence and chaos. Votary as I am of non-violence, if I was given a choice between being a helpless witness to chaos and perpetual slavery, I should unhesitatingly say that I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to the Hindus and Musalmans doing one another to death than that I should daily witness our gilded slavery. The spectre of an Afghan invasion is raised in certain quarters, the moment we talk of independence. I do not mind the invasion when we have severed our slavish connection with Britain. But I am an incorrigible optimist and my faith in India winning her independence by a bloodless revolution is unshakable. I think it is quite possible, if you will be true to your pledge."

On the Independence Day the following resolution was recited in the mammoth meetings all over India, including many places in the N.-W. Frontier Province:

"We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom, but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence. We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including the non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help, stop payment of the taxes, without doing violence even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We, therefore, solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swaraj."

Abdul Ghaffar and his co-workers were constantly shadowed by the C.I.D. and sometimes the armed guards and the British officers were present at his public meetings. They wondered how such a revolution was brought about; they were greatly unnerved. They connived at the movement for four months, the period during which intensive work and

touring was done. Then suddenly the Deputy-Commissioner of Peshawar, Mr. Metcalfe, sent a word to Abdul Ghaffar to see him. When he refused to do so, the Chief Commissioner sent an order to meet him. To Abdul Ghaffar he said: "What are you doing? Stop it." Abdul Ghaffar replied: "This is basically a social movement and not a political movement, and indeed the Government itself should have launched it. I am doing your work, you should extend your help and co-operation." The Chief Commissioner remarked: "I admit that, at present, you are engaged in social work. But what guarantee is there that after organizing the Pakhtuns you will not use them against us?" He replied: "Such a guarantee is based on mutual trust. You trust us and we shall trust you. I feel that a revolution is in the offing. It is like a mighty flood. We are organizing the Pakhtuns in order that they will not be swept away before the flood."

On March 12, 1930 Gandhi set on the historic salt march to Dandi. On April 14, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress President, was arrested.

The first official meeting of the Khudai Khidmatgars was convened at Utmanzai on the 18th and 19th of April, 1930. About 200 Red Shirts attended the meeting. On April 23 Abdul Ghaffar addressed a mass meeting at Utmanzai, exhorting people to participate in civil disobedience. Before he could reach Peshawar by car for organizing the movement, he was arrested at the Naki Police Thana and brought back to Charsadda. With him were arrested Mian Ahmed Shah, the secretary of Afghan Youth League, Abdul Akbar Khan, the president, and Salar Sarfraz Khan and Shah Nawaz Khan, the organizers of the meeting. "The Britishers have insulted us by arresting Badshah Khan in our territory," said the residents of Naki and they declared that they all were henceforth Khudai Khidmatgars.

"They raised my prestige in the eyes of the British," writes Abdul Ghaffar. "When the news of my arrest reached the people, they registered their protest, collecting in thousands at Charsadda. On that day some of my colleagues in Peshawar were also arrested and that caused great commotion in Kissa Khani Bazar. There was firing and many were killed. At Charsadda, too, people surrounded the jail. Dr. Khan Sahib hastened to the spot and pacified them. True to our teaching, the people remained non-violent. In the afternoon we all were put in a police van and the cavalry escorted us to Mardan. The people were lying on the road to stop the van, but I successfully persuaded the people to allow the military to take me away. In the evening we reached the Mardan jail. The following day we were taken to Risalpur and produced before a magistrate, who sentenced us all to three years' rigorous imprisonment under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation.

"From there we were removed to the Gujrat jail in the Punjab. Many of our workers from Peshawar were already lodged in this jail. Leaders from the Punjab, Delhi and the Frontier were there too."

A vivid account of the aftermath is given by Dr. Khan Sahib thus:

"A meeting was to be held in Utmanzai the next day and there was a possibility of an outbreak of violence. So I motored down from Peshawar to Utmanzai. I reached the place a couple of hours before the appointed time and was successful in taking away whatever arms the people had with them. Here I made my first political speech in a public place. When I finished my speech somebody approached and told me that the Guides Cavalry had arrived. I announced that those who were not prepared to face the situation, should leave the meeting. But none left. I ordered the Red Shirts to get on the platform. The commander of the cavalry announced that they were going to open fire and the meeting should be dispersed. But the people took no notice. The commander asked me if I could help him. I told him that the meeting was finished. 'The best thing for you would be to go back and we will march to our destination. But if you want to do any shooting, you must start now; because once we leave the place, shooting would not be a very brave thing.' The commander tried to bluff me but eventually left with his men, and the Red Shirts accompanied by their bands marched to a place next to a mosque. There they were divided into groups and ordered to march to their respective stations. On their way they were attacked by a squad of the British cavalry. Mohamed Aslam Khan who was in command of the Red Shirts, ordered them to fall on the ground. The cavalry charged them but stopped just when they reached the first row. After trying this for a couple of times, they all retired. The officials lost their heads and repression was intense. But the result was that by the end of September we had over 80,000 volunteers."

Gandhi broke the salt law at Dandi in April, and immediately he issued a statement: "Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the salt law has been committed, it is open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution, to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient." The country was ablaze. In Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Lahore, Allahabad, and Peshawar, thousands of people defied the British rule. In Bombay itself the civil disobedience movement reached amazing proportions. A million people went to the beach to defy the salt law. About 80,000 persons in Calcutta, 50,000 in Madras, 20,000 in Lahore, and almost the entire population of the Peshawar city had broken the salt laws.

It soon became clear that the Government was faced by a national uprising far more extensive and determined than had ever before been

seen in India. One of the centres of greatest disturbance was Peshawar. For a time there was strict censorship of telegrams, and the divergence between the Indian and the British accounts was serious. The Government was forced to appoint the Sulaiman Inquiry Committee. Within a fortnight of the disturbances in Peshawar, the Congress appointed an inquiry committee headed by Vithalbhai Patel, who had resigned the membership and the Presidentship of the Legislative Assembly on account of the Government's repressive policy. A number of ordinances were promulgated including the Press Ordinance, resulting in closure of Gandhi's *Young India* and Abdul Ghaffar's *Pakhtun*. *Young India* was issued in cyclostyle and so also the illegal *Congress Bulletin* with supplements issued by the provincial organizations, the North-West Frontier Province being one of them.

The Peshawar Inquiry Committee headed by Vithalbhai Patel was not allowed to enter the Frontier Province and, therefore, their meetings were held at Rawalpindi for a week and 79 witnesses were examined and several statements were received and recorded. They also put on record the more important communiques issued by the Government from time to time and also the press reports containing the summary of evidence recorded by the Sulaiman Committee. The report was hastily banned, but its copies were widely circulated. The summary of the 350-page report submitted by Vithalbhai Patel is as follows:

"On April 5, 1930 the local Congress committee resolved to forthwith picket liquor shops in Peshawar city. Some of the liquor contractors requested the Congress committee to grant them fifteen days' time to dispose of their stock. Therefore, the Congress committee notified to the liquor contractors that picketing would commence on April 23. On the morning of April 22 the All-India Congress Committee deputation that was proceeding to Peshawar to make inquiry into the working of the North-West Frontier Regulations was stopped at Attock and not allowed to enter the province. When the news was known in the city of Peshawar a large procession was taken out through the city and in the evening a huge mass meeting was held at Shahi Bagh to protest against the order of the Government and it was also decided to start picketing of liquor shops from the morning of 23rd. The authorities arrested nine of the prominent members of the Congress in the early hours of the morning. At daybreak, when people came to know about the arrests, they met in the Congress committee office and learnt that the warrants were out against two more leaders. The arrangements for picketing the liquor shops were being carried out. There was a spontaneous hartal all over the city. At 9 a.m., when the people were standing in a crowd to give ovation to the volunteers who were being sent out on picketing

duty, a Sub-Inspector of Police with armed constables came in a lorry to the Congress office and intimated that he had with him two more warrants. The two leaders on receiving the news came out of the office and sat in the lorry. After they had proceeded a short distance one of its tyres got punctured and the sub-inspector was thinking of sending for another lorry when the arrested leaders told the sub-inspector that they would of their own accord present themselves in the police thana if he had no objection. The sub-inspector agreed to this and went away. The procession started with the leaders and reached the Kabuli Gate Thana. They found the gates of the thana closed. For half an hour all endeavours to get the thana gates opened proved futile. The Assistant-Superintendent of Police arrived on horseback when people shouted national slogans. He got angry and left in a huff. Meanwhile the sub-inspector, who had arrested the leaders, exhorted the people to remain non-violent and to disperse. The leaders went inside the police station and the crowd began to disperse with shouts of 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Mahatma Gandhi-ki jai'. Then, all of a sudden two or three armoured cars came at great speed from behind without giving warning of their approach and drove into the crowd regardless of consequences. Several people were run over, of whom some were injured and a few killed on the spot. The people were not armed—no lathis, hatchets, stones or bricks. The crowd behaved with great restraint, collecting the wounded and dead persons. Some people went in front of the car and implored that the car should stop. As the crowd collected, the car was being reversed. At this time one Englishman came dashing on a motor-cycle. The cycle collided with the armoured car and the Englishman fell down and was run over by the car. Fire was opened by some one from the car and it so happened that one of the cars accidently caught fire. The Deputy-Commissioner came out of his armoured car and as he proceeded to the thana, he fell down on the staircase of the thana unconscious. In a minute he gained consciousness and ordered the crew of the armoured cars to open fire. As a result of this firing several people were killed and wounded and the crowd was pushed back some distance. At about half-past eleven, endeavours were made by one or two outsiders to persuade the crowd to disperse and the authorities to remove the troops and the armoured cars. The crowds were willing to disperse if they were allowed to remove the dead and the injured and if the armoured cars and the troops were removed. The authorities, on the other hand, expressed their determination not to remove the armoured cars and the troops. The result was that the people did not disperse and were prepared to receive the bullets and lay down their lives. The second firing then began and, off and on, lasted for more than three

hours not only in the Kissa Khani Bazar but also in the by-lanes. A large number of persons were killed and wounded. A rough estimate given by some witnesses is two to three hundred killed and many more wounded. Five or six Khilafat volunteers who were among those engaged in removing the dead and the wounded were also killed. Several corpses, therefore, could not be removed and were, it is alleged, taken in a lorry to some unknown destination and disposed of. The Khilafat volunteers and the others were able to remove about sixty dead bodies mostly from the by-lanes to the Khilafat office. A large number of the wounded were taken to that office and after dressing were sent by Dr. Khan Sahib to the Lady Reading Hospital. The Government did not provide any facilities for first aid to the wounded and did everything in their power to minimize the extent of the havoc caused by the merciless firing. At about six in the evening the military raided the Congress office and removed the Congress flag and badges, etc. At night they removed two dead bodies which were brought late in the evening to the Khilafat office and kept for the whole night at the school near by. For the next two or three days Peshawar became a hell to live in, owing to the atrocities of the British troops. All of a sudden the authorities, on the night of the 25th, removed not only the military but also the usual police, who were protecting the city. The city was left to the mercy of the trans-border raiders and plunderers. The Congress and Khilafat volunteers came forward and bravely met the situation by guarding the gates of Peshawar city, and nothing untoward happened. On the night of the 28th April, the police again appeared and took charge from the volunteers. On May 4, the military, all of a sudden, reoccupied the city. That morning they raided the Congress and the Youth League offices, removed all papers, cash, etc., and mercilessly belaboured a large number of volunteers who were there and even looted a shop near the Congress office. From that day onward the city has been for all practical purposes under martial law. Life, liberty or property of no one in Peshawar is safe. On May 31, when the Sulaiman Committee was holding its inquiry in Peshawar the military opened fire on people who were taking for burial the dead bodies of two children alleged to have been shot down by a British soldier by accident. As a result of this firing, at least, ten people were killed and twenty-two wounded. It has all along been a reign of terror in Peshawar. The province has become a forbidden land to the outside world. To screen the ugly happenings from the public eye, it is isolated from the rest of India and no public leader is allowed to step in there, see things for himself and expose the abuses of administration. Methods no less atrocious are being pursued in other parts of the Peshawar district and also in other districts of the

province wherever the Congress has influence. All the Congress organizations, Youth Leagues and the allied organizations have been declared illegal. In spite of all this the spirit of the people has remained unbroken and strict non-violence has been observed."

A significant feature of the disturbances of Peshawar was a defiant refusal by a platoon of the Garhwal Rifles, which had always been distinguished for its loyalty, to proceed against the unarmed and peaceful crowd. They were all promptly arrested and disarmed. At the court martial proceedings, the men said: "We will not shoot our unarmed brethren, because India's army is to fight India's enemies without. You may blow us from the guns, if you like." Seventeen men were sentenced—one to transportation for life, another to fifteen years imprisonment and the rest to terms of rigorous imprisonment, varying from three to ten years.

An eyewitness account of the happenings in Abdul Ghaffar's village, published in Patel's report, is as follows:

"On May 13, 1930, at 3 a.m., the Government besieged the village of Utmanzai while it was still dark. At the break of day, the Deputy-Commissioner with the British and Indian troops entered the village. Outside the village were posted eight hundred British mounted troops and one regiment of Indian cavalry, consisting of Sikhs, Muslims and Dogras. Besides this were present the Shia soldiers, three hundred strong, who had been specially enlisted to beat. They were from trans-border villages. There were four Lewis guns and numberless other guns outside the village. The Deputy-Commissioner went near the office of the Khudai Khidmatgars and ordered the British and the Shia soldiers to break the gate of the shop over which the said office was situated. They tried their best but failed. They, therefore, surrounded the balcony by climbing up the walls. The soldiers who were standing below began to break open the shop.

"The Deputy-Commissioner went up to the balcony and ordered the Khudai Khidmatgars, who were on duty there, to go down and take off their red uniforms. They replied that they would not go down, unless ordered by their own officer, and that they all would rather die than take off their uniforms and their clothes. At this Rabnawaz Khan, the Commander of Khudai Khidmatgars, ordered them to go down with cries of 'Inquilab Zindabad'. The Deputy-Commissioner tried to prevent them from shouting slogans, as they were going down, and touching the breast of a Khudai Khidmatgar with his revolver ordered him to take off his clothes. He replied, 'Sahib, it is impossible. And the trousers of a Pathan cannot be taken off as long as he is alive.' Thereupon the Deputy-Commissioner beat him with fists and two British soldiers began

to hit him with the butt-ends of their rifles till he fell down unconscious. In this unconscious state his clothes were torn and thus he was rendered naked. After this, Faiz Mohamed, a Khudai Khidmatgar, was ordered to take off his clothes. He too refused. Eight or nine soldiers began to take off his clothes forcibly. But he was a tall and powerfully built young man and they could not bend him. Then they wounded him on his forehead and beat him till he lay unconscious. In his unconscious state every British soldier who was there kicked him. Thus, one after another, every Khudai Khidmatgar was beaten severely and his clothes torn off. Abdul Razak and several other Khudai Khidmatgars were hurled down to the pakka metal road from the balcony. Abdul Razak broke his foot and others were badly injured. Some were wounded by bayonets. Mohamed Naquib Khan, the captain of the Khudai Khidmatgars, was mercilessly beaten. His shirt was forcibly taken off, but when he was ordered to take off his trousers, he dashed towards his house to fetch a revolver to retaliate. But the commander intervened: 'Is your patience exhausted so soon that you are now going to retaliate by violence? You swore to remain non-violent till death!' At this he returned bareheaded and barefoot and without any shirt, and was arrested.

"In the confusion and beating which was going on, was standing in uniform a fourteen-year boy, Wali, the second son of Abdul Ghaffar. 'Who are you?' asked the Deputy-Commissioner. 'I am the son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan,' shouted back Wali. The Deputy-Commissioner having abused him, a British soldier pointed a bayonet at him. But a Muslim soldier who was witnessing this, pushed his hand to intervene. Another British soldier, who was standing by, nowadvanced, but Hassan Khan, brother of Sarfaraz Khan, who was in charge of arrested persons, took the boy in his hands and jumped down to the nearby mosque and thus saved the boy."

The soldiers set fire to the Khudai Khidmatgar office and ravaged the village. They would not allow the people even to answer the call of nature. They would not allow even their cattle to graze. They arrested all who were in red shirts and belaboured them mercilessly. "Any more Red Shirts left," roared the Deputy-Commissioner. Out of fright none dared to speak out. Mohamed Abbas Khan, a Khan of the village, was standing by. On hearing the Deputy-Commissioner's arrogant remark, he rushed to his house, put red powder in a vat filled with water and dipped his clothes in it. He and his servants donned the wet clothes and dashed back to the spot in front of the troops. "Here are the Red Shirts," he said defiantly to the Deputy-Commissioner. Till then he was not a Khudai Khidmatgar. His chivalrous act infused such spirit in the people that no amount of repression could banish the red uniform.

Accompanied by troops, the Britishers surrounded the villages and compelled the villagers to come out of their homes. They made them sit in the scorching heat of the sun and ordered them to give their thumb-impressions to the confession, "We are not Khudai Khidmatgars."

"But we are not Khudai Khidmatgars," they used to say and indeed they were not. Again they insisted that they should give their thumb-print. They refused. This behaviour of the Britishers was so distasteful to the villagers that all men and women looked down with contempt upon anyone who acquiesced. "A man of our village had given a thumb-impression," narrates Abdul Ghaffar. "When he reached home, his wife, who was busy washing clothes with a wooden club, asked the husband how he managed to return home. He said that he was let off. 'How is it possible when the others are not?' she asked. 'Let me see your thumb. I think that you have given your thumb-impression.' She raised her club and chased the husband out. He went back to the spot to rejoin his companions. When questioned he said, 'My wife does not let me in.' Another resident of my village, Haji Shah Nawaz Khan, who was with us in jail, got himself released by furnishing security. Constantly the villagers taunted him and he committed suicide."

Repression was intense all over the province but the Red Shirts in large number picketed the liquor shops and marched in the villages. The men, women and children had their own units in the Khudai Khidmatgar organization. Their slogan was "Inquilab Zindabad". The British introduced novel methods of torture. Young boys were given thirty stripes in jail. They made the volunteers sit on the thorns, they stripped them of their clothes, they made them carry large stones for a tomb of their leader uphill and pile them there. The religious cry of "Allah-O-Akbar" was railed at. "There it is lying buried under the tomb of stones that 'Allah-O-Akbar'," they pointed to a heap of stones prepared by forced labour at the point of the bayonet. The houses and *hujras* of the Khudai Khidmatgar leaders were burnt down. The city gates of Bannu were closed and Bannu was blockaded. In Dera Ismail Khan the movement was very strong. Led by Paira Khan and his wife, Yashoda Devi, big processions were taken out by men, women and children. Once a procession, mostly consisting of women, was stopped and ordered to disperse by Mr. Isemonger, the Inspector-General of Police. When the people defied the order, Mr. Isemonger whipped out his revolver and pointed it at the women. A Sikh youth, Bhagwan Singh, rushed forward and, grappling the wrist of the officer, said, "Are you not ashamed to shoot at the women?" He got unnerved, dropped the revolver and left the place in shame. He took the revenge on Bhagwan Singh a year later by falsely implicating him in a murder case during the communal riots.

The tribal disturbances which followed these events greatly unnerved the British. The Haji of Turangzai was so moved by the British atrocities that he sent a message to the Frontier brethren that they should stand fast and should not entertain any fear whatever in their mind and that he was collecting a well-armed lashkar to punish the Britishers. There were stirrings in the tribal area and a big British force was kept in readiness to meet the emergency. The hide-outs of the Haji of Turangzai and his followers were repeatedly bombed and on at least one occasion the artillery was taken to fire into the mouths of the caves which they had occupied in the mountain passes. In August the Afridis advanced across the frontier. A considerable British force was employed against them, hundreds of bombs being dropped in a day. The position was made more critical by the assistance given to the Afridis by the villagers. The telegraph and telephone communications were cut in several places. The authorities used more repression, but it did not stop the movement.

The Frontier authority considered that the province was a powder-magazine; therefore, that its people should not be allowed any freedom, and that any popular movement should be crushed. To undermine the Congress influence, the Chief Commissioner, on May 10th, 1930, issued the following communique to the Khans, the tribal chiefs and leading men of the Peshawar district:

"You have personally witnessed how the Congress committees have tried and are still trying to upset the system of government established by law. Is the Congress going to leave with you your landed property your *jagirs* and your *muajibs*? Is it going to protect your frontiers? Will it maintain law and order amongst the people?

"Now it is time for you to help the Government which has ever been benevolent to you and has done justice towards you. What help can you render to the Government? You must prevent the Congress volunteers, wearing red jackets, from entering your villages. They call themselves Khudai Khidmatgars, Servants of God. But, in reality, they are servants of Gandhi. They wear the dress of Bolsheviks and they are nothing but Bolsheviks. They will create the same atmosphere as you have heard of in Bolshevik domination."

In defending the use of large forces in the N.-W. Frontier Province the Government said that it was an act of mercy, for they restrained the Red Shirts, giving them no chance for being violent. "The brutes must be ruled brutally and by brutes."

Summing up the grave situation in the North-West Frontier Province, the Government of India publication, *India in 1930–1*, said: "In August 1930 martial law had to be imposed and kept in force until the following January. Almost immediately after the occurrence of the Peshawar

riots symptoms of unrest began to be manifest all along the Frontier from Hazara district to Dera Ismail Khan. The activities of the Royal Air Force over the tribal territory between May and September assisted greatly towards the final restoration of order. During the whole period covered by these various tribal risings and incursions, the troops had also to be widely employed in helping the civil authorities to uphold the administration throughout the Settled Districts in the province. The task of the military was usually to surround the disaffected towns and villages under cover of darkness in order that the civil officers might effect arrests at daybreak, and frequently it proved necessary to maintain cordons round the centres of disaffection for days at a time. The administration was much handicapped in dealing with the disturbances on the Frontier during the year, by the fact that their causes were distinctly unusual; for never before, except possibly to some extent in 1919, had any of the risings in this region been closely associated with the political movements and agitations of the rest of the country. Hitherto, the Frontierman had tended to concentrate his attention solely on his feuds with his neighbours and the local Government and to pay no attention to what was going on elsewhere; and so far as he was concerned at all with external events, it was with those of Muslim countries of the West rather than those of India. On this occasion, however, it is unquestionable that much of the trouble was directly due to the activities of the Congress party; and the extensive influence which this organization proved itself to have acquired over a predominantly Muslim population amongst which it had hitherto appeared to have but little following, was the most curious feature of the whole outbreak. Moreover, as a result of the operations of the Red Shirt organization, for whose creation Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was largely responsible, inflammatory ideas had been widely disseminated in the rural areas. And the remarkable fact that during the course of their numerous incursions into the Settled Districts the tribesmen altogether abstained from looting in their customary manner the villages they had passed through and that the Afridis, when negotiating a settlement with the authorities, put forward demands for the release of Mr. Gandhi and the repeal of the special ordinances in India, clearly showed that the Congress agents had been active on the other side of the border also."

The tribesmen gave the following ultimatum to the British: "Release Badshah Khan and Malang Baba (the naked fakir, Gandhi); release the Khudai Khidmatgars and stop the atrocities and repression against the Pakhtuns. If you don't, we shall declare war on you." They had also demanded the release of "Inquilab", thinking it was a person. The universal slogan among tribesmen was "Inquilab Zindabad".

For the first time Abdul Ghaffar was confined to one place, the Gujrat jail in the Punjab, and was allowed to have the congenial company of some of his future associates from the Punjab, Delhi and the Frontier. The name "Frontier Gandhi" affectionately used by his admirers and slightingly by his adversaries, would seem to derive from this period. He had studied Gandhi's autobiography critically and had showed a readiness to take a leaf out of his book. During this imprisonment he not only kept a fast once a week, but also observed silence for a day each week. Of the jail life Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"All the political prisoners, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, were well-behaved and serious-minded. The religious, literary and political benefits that I derived from and the blissful life I led in this jail, was a unique experience in my whole jail life. In no other jail was I lucky enough to spend my days with such enlightened persons. Under the guidance of Dr. Ansari we had formed a parliament of our own to train us to run our government, which, he thought, was in the offing. Dr. Gopichand Bhargava used to procure books for us from Lahore. At every interview the wife of Hansraj used to bring for us various eatables. Pandit Jagatram from the Andamans and I conducted classes in the Gita and the Koran. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Dr. Kitchlew used to wrangle over the key post and vied to win over the Frontier prisoners because whosoever we sided with, ultimately, won. Devadas Gandhi was with us for a few months. Some of us prepared *pakodas* and tasty preparations. All the prisoners were a decent lot and I still cherish the happy memory of these days.

"While we were kept in jail, the tyrannical Government indulged in inhuman oppression. Mian Jafar Shah and Abdullah Shah who had come for an interview and had acquainted us with the situation in the Frontier Province, were requested to visit Lahore, Delhi and Simla, to inform the Muslim League leaders about the people's plight and seek their help in, at least, acquainting the outside world with the situation in the Frontier. In a couple of months they again came for an interview with us. They told us that the Muslim League leaders did not want to help us because we resisted the Britishers. They were not prepared to oppose the Britishers, they wanted to fight the Hindus. We had not joined the Congress till then. As a drowning man tries to catch hold of any straw—being thwarted by the Muslim League—we requested the two colleagues to seek help from the National Congress. When they met the Congress leaders, they readily agreed to help us in every way, provided we joined them in the struggle for India's freedom. We asked them to convene the Provincial Jirga of the Khudai Khidmatgars to consider the Congress proposal. The jirga unanimously decided to

stand by the Congress and publicly announced that they had decided to join the Congress.

"When the British came to know about the united front of the Pakhtuns with the Congress, they came to their senses. They sent me word that I should come to an understanding with them. They said that all reforms conferred on India would apply at once to the Frontier Province and, in future, they will give us a preferential treatment over India in reforms, provided we disowned the Congress. I called all the political prisoners together and related them the whole story and sought their advice. Most of them advised me to take advantage of the situation, be a diplomat and accept the British offer. I told them that I was not a hypocrite and the British were not dependable; we must not go back on our promise to the Congress and we are morally bound to stand by it. I replied to the Government, 'As you have not trusted us, we cannot trust you.' "

The first Round Table Conference in London suspended its work by January 1931. For nearly ten weeks the various committees met to discuss a constitution on the lines suggested by the Simon Commission. The strength of the Congress and its title to speak for a vast majority of the Indian people was stated and endorsed by speaker after speaker at the conference. "His Majesty's Government," said Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, "in view of the character of the conference and of the limited time at its disposal in London, had now deemed it advisable to suspend its work at this point so that the Indian opinion may be consulted upon the work done and the expedients considered for overcoming difficulties which have been raised."

On January 25, 1931, Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, issued a statement releasing unconditionally Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee members: "Our action has been taken strictly in pursuance of a sincere desire to assist the creation of such peaceable conditions as would enable the Government to implement the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that if civil quiet were proclaimed and assured, the Government would not be backward in response."

"The mere release of the members of the Congress Working Committee makes a difficult situation infinitely more difficult and makes any action on the part of the members almost impossible," stated Gandhi. "The authorities have evidently not perceived that the movement has so much affected the mass mind that the Congress leaders, however prominent, will be utterly unable to dictate to them a particular course of action. Speaking for myself, I am hankering after peace, if it can be had with honour. I should, therefore, judge the Round Table Conference by its fruit."

The first anniversary of the Independence Day was observed all over the country by holding mass meetings which confirmed the resolution of independence and passed a resolution of remembrance:

"We record our proud and grateful appreciation of the sons and the daughters of India who have taken part in the struggle for independence and have suffered and sacrificed so that the motherland may be free; of our great and beloved leader, Mahatma Gandhi, who has been a constant inspiration for us, ever pointing to the path of high purpose and noble endeavour; of the hundreds of our brave youths who have laid down their lives at the altar of freedom; of the martyrs of Peshawar and the North-West Frontier Province, Sholapur, Midnapur and Bombay; of the scores of thousands who have faced and suffered barbarous lathi attacks from the forces of the enemy; of the men of the Garhwali Regiment and other Indians in the military and police ranks of the Government who have refused, at the peril of their own lives, to fire or take other action against their countrymen; of the indomitable peasantry of Gujarat and the brave and long-suffering peasantry of the other parts of India which has taken part in the struggle despite every effort to suppress it; of the merchants and the other members of the commercial community who have helped, at great loss to themselves, in the national struggle and especially in the boycotts of foreign cloth and British goods; of the one hundred thousand men and women who have gone to prisons and have suffered all manner of privations and, sometimes, assaults and beatings even inside of jail-walls, and especially of the ordinary volunteer who, like a true soldier of India, without care of fame or award, thinking only of the great cause he served, has laboured unceasingly and peacefully through suffering and hardship.

"We record our homage and deep admiration for the womenhood of India who, in the hour of peril for the motherland, forsook the shelter of their homes and, with unfailing courage and endurance, stood shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in the front line of our national army to share with them the sacrifices and triumphs of the struggle; and our pride of the youth of the country and the Vanar Sena whom even their tender age could not prevent from participating in the struggle.

"And further we record our grateful appreciation of the fact that the major and minor communities and classes in India have joined together in the great struggle and given of their best to the cause. . . And with this splendid and inspiring example of sacrifice and suffering in India's cause before us, we repeat our pledge of independence and resolve to carry on the fight till India is completely free."

After prolonged discussions, on March 5, 1931 a pact was signed by Lord Irwin and Gandhi. "Civil disobedience," the communique said,

"will be effectively discontinued and the reciprocal action will be taken by the Government." The boycott of foreign goods to encourage Indian industries was allowed, but not as a political weapon. Peaceful picketing of foreign cloth shops and liquor booths too could be continued under the pact.

As a result of the Irwin-Gandhi pact all the political prisoners, except Abdul Ghaffar, were released from the Gujrat jail. When he asked the Superintendent of Jail, why he alone was still not set free, the superintendent replied that some prominent Muslim leaders like Sir Fazl-i-Husain and Nawab Sahibzada Sir Abdulqayyum wanted to meet him. "I do not want to see them," said Abdul Ghaffar. "When we were in trouble, they did not help us. Now because of the truce, they suddenly remember me. Kindly ask them not to come."

The Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, Sir Steuart Pears, was opposed to Abdul Ghaffar's release. He informed the Viceroy that two incompatible persons could not live in the Frontier Province. "Either he or I will stay in the province." Gandhi insisted that Abdul Ghaffar was a Congressman and should be released. "The Pakhtuns are deceiving you," stated the Viceroy. "They are not non-violent. You should visit the province yourself to study the conditions there." In the end Abdul Ghaffar was released.

Soon after his release, on March 11, 1931, Abdul Ghaffar described the Irwin-Gandhi pact as a temporary truce and exhorted the people to prepare for conflict, if necessary, and revealed that he proposed to raise the number of Khudai Khidmatgars to a hundred thousand. He arrived in Peshawar unexpectedly and was spontaneously received by large crowds. He made a number of speeches in the city, including at the martyrs' temporary memorial.

Abdul Ghaffar was received most enthusiastically on his return to Utmanzai. Not wasting a moment he resumed his work of organizing the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. In a number of speeches he remarked: "One horn of the Firangi is already broken. Now you arise and get ready to break the other horn. This is your land, God has ordained it to you, but owing to your disunity, the Firangis are occupying your land. Your children die of hunger and thirst, while their children are enjoying everything they want."

His constant reference to the broken horn displeased the British greatly and they maligned him among his colleagues. They said Abdul Ghaffar worked for destruction and not for construction. They told the Frontier leaders: "You are qualified men, he is not educated like you. You work and he gets all the credit. His activities will land you in trouble." This propaganda had effect on some of his colleagues. They met in Mardan

at Kazi Atatullah's residence. They implored Abdul Ghaffar to discontinue his tours and stop harping on the broken horn of the Britishers. "Then what am I to tell the people?" he asked them. They told him to say, "We have now made truce with the British and extend our hand of friendship to each other." He remonstrated that that would not help him to infuse the spirit in the Pakhtuns and stressed that the truce would be shortlived. "God has given us now a good opportunity to work and it should not be lost."

The pact was ratified by the Congress held at Karachi by the end of March. Abdul Ghaffar accompanied by a hundred Khudai Khidmatgars in their impressive uniforms and band attended the annual session for the first time as invitees. They were allotted a separate camp in the Congress Nagar.

At Karachi, on the day of the execution of Bhagat Singh, the national hero, the delegates for the plenary session of the Congress were already assembling and the atmosphere was tense. The recent communal riots culminating in the death of Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi had cast a gloom over the session. The truce though welcomed by the great majority, was not popular and there was a fear that it might lead the Congress to all manner of compromising situations. As Gandhi approached the Karachi railway station, members of Nawajawan Sabha in red shirts shouted: "Gandhi, go back", "Down with Gandhism", "Gandhi's truce has sent Bhagat Singh to the gallows", "Long live Bhagat Singh", "Long live Revolution". Far from being angered by them, Gandhi had a good word to say for the young men: "In this our country of self-suppression and timidity, almost bordering on cowardice, we cannot have too much bravery and too much self-sacrifice. One's head bends before Bhagat Singh's bravery and self-sacrifice. But I want the greater bravery of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul."

It was feared that the demonstrators would make it quite impossible for the Congress to go on. The first speech in the Congress pandal was delivered by Gandhi to an audience of 50,000 on March 26. The canopy of sky under which the Congress was meeting, lent a special charm. Addressing the youth, Gandhi said:

"If you want my service, do not disown me. You must know that it is against my creed to punish even a murderer, a thief or a dacoit. There can be, therefore, no excuse for suspicion that I did not want to save Bhagat Singh. But I want you also to realize Bhagat Singh's error. If I had an opportunity of speaking to Bhagat Singh and his comrades, I should have told them that the way they pursued was wrong and futile.

I declare that we cannot win swaraj for our famishing millions, for our deaf and dumb, for our lame and crippled, by the way of the sword. With God as witness, I want to proclaim this truth that the way of violence cannot bring swaraj, it can only lead to disaster. I wish to tell these young men with all the authority with which a father can speak to his children that the way of violence can only lead to perdition. I shall now explain to you why. Do you think all the women and children who covered themselves with glory during the last campaign would have done so if we had pursued the path of violence? Would they have been here today? Would our women known as the meekest on earth have done the unique service they did if we had violence in us? We were able to enlist as soldiers, millions of men, women and children, because we were pledged to non-violence.

"I beseech the young men to have patience and self-control. Anger cannot take us forward. I have used satyagraha against the Englishmen but have never thought of them as enemies. We need not consider the Englishmen as our enemies. I want to convert them, and the only way is the way of love. I beseech you to trust my unbroken experience of forty years of the practice of non-violence."

The session was held on March 29 in an open-air stadium, packed with delegates numbering over 3,200 and several thousands of visitors. The President, Sardar Patel, came to the pandal in a procession, headed by volunteers, carrying two national flags, immediately followed by the Red Shirts playing the band. In the procession were Gandhi and other members of the Working Committee, Subhas Bose and Abdul Ghaffar. "The Congress represents and exists for the millions," was the refrain of the Sardar's short address. The main resolution dealt with the truce terms and the Round Table Conference. Among those who supported the resolution was Abdul Ghaffar. He came to the rostrum amidst shouts of "Inquilab Zindabad" and spoke briefly. He said that he was ill, but he could not disobey the command of Mahatma Gandhi. He was only a soldier. When the commander asked what he knew, he replied that he knew only to obey. The Pakhtuns had great faith in Mahatma Gandhi, and it was only he who made them friends of India and Indians.

Gandhi followed Abdul Ghaffar and spoke both in English and in Hindi. "No promise is being made," he stressed, "that if the deputation goes to the conference, whether here or in England, or enters upon further negotiations, that deputation is going to bring Complete Independence. It will come only when the full authority of the Congress has been manifested and not a minute before. And it will be the greatest achievement of the Congress to bring swaraj, if it does. All that I promise faithfully to you on my own behalf and on behalf of any delegation that



Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, 35



Photo: D. G. Tendulkar

Karachi Congress, 1931, with Pandit Malaviya



In the procession

you might wish to send with me is that we shall not be disloyal to the Congress in any shape or form."

There were several references to the heroic role played by the Frontier people and two resolutions were adopted. "Inasmuch as propaganda is said to be going on in the Frontier Province that the Congress does not mean well by them and it is desirable that the Congress takes steps to dispel this suspicion, this Congress hereby places on record its opinion that in any constitutional scheme the Frontier Province shall have the same form of Government as the other provinces in India."

By another resolution the Congress disapproved the forward policy in the N.-W. Frontier Province. Moving the resolution, Jawaharlal Nehru said: "For years past the Afghans had been painted as savages who were out to murder and pillage, and the moment the British Government were out of India there would be universal loot. It is a false impression and similar misrepresentation is made in the Frontier. I have known Pathans who are honest, brave and loyal friends. I am confident that under swaraj, India will have the most cordial relations with the borderland. The British Government are doing their utmost to enslave the people of no man's land by their forward policy. Indians who are groaning under the foreign yoke, do not wish the others to be enslaved, but their silence today would be misrepresented. That is why I ask the delegates to pass the resolution which I place before the house."

Abdul Ghaffar supporting the resolution said that the Government had purposely kept the Indians in the dark about the facts in regard to the Frontier. The times were gone when the British Government could keep India divided by the Afghan bogy. The Pakhtuns today had full confidence in Mahatma Gandhi. And if in future they were to launch civil disobedience, the Pakhtuns would not be found wanting in helping India to win swaraj. "We will demonstrate what we are," he declared and made an appeal for communal unity. The slaves had no religion and Hindus and Muslims should not fight over the trivial matters. He told the audience that the Government had been carrying on propaganda against India in the Frontier Province. They were asking people what had they gained by the release of Mahatma Gandhi, which they had been demanding for the last twelve months, and what had he done for them? The resolution, therefore, if passed, would be a message of goodwill to those people.

He had delivered a message from the Afridis to Gandhi in which they had requested him to come to the Frontier and see things for himself and how millions were squandered in order to keep India in bondage. The Afridis had also suggested that Mahatma Gandhi should be their arbitrator and if he found their demand just, he was to press upon the

Government to leave their country and make them free. Concluding he said that Mahatma Gandhi alone could restore peace in the Frontier Province and the borderland and thereby help in reducing the huge military expenditure.

The resolution on "Fundamental Rights" was presented at Karachi: "In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions . . ."

Abdul Ghaffar and his close colleagues were greatly impressed by the Congress and they exchanged views and got well acquainted with Nehru and Gandhi. The Khudai Khidmatgars were dutiful and disciplined and wherever there was a difficult job to do, they were posted there and they performed their task well. They were popular and drew a cheer wherever they went. Abdul Ghaffar impressed Gandhi as being sincere in his profession of non-violence.

The Prophet's Work

1931

KARACHI gave the mandate to Gandhi to represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference. But the road to London was tortuous. Both in England and in India the vested interests were against the truce. Winston Churchill had said: "It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr. Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal palace, while he is still organizing and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience, to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor." The same attitude prevailed in the Indian Civil Service.

The first hurdle Gandhi tried to negotiate was the communal tangle and a beginning was made at Karachi itself, where the annual session of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind was held on the 1st April, 1931, under the presidentship of Maulana Azad. Addressing the audience, Gandhi referred to the communal riots in Agra, Benares, Cawnpore, Mirzapore and several other places where the Hindus and the Muslims fought like enemies. He could not apportion the blame to either community alone, he said. "I appeal to you, learned theologians of Islam, to use your good offices and eradicate the poison of communalism from the Musalmans and teach them the doctrine of mutual goodwill and tolerance. I will make a similar appeal to the Hindus not to return blow for blow but treat Musalmans as their brethren even if the Musalmans are wrong." Hindu-Muslim unity alone could achieve swaraj for India, and he was convinced that unless the intercommunal tangle was solved, it would be useless to go to the Round Table Conference. Speaking for himself, he was quite prepared to concede to the Musalmans everything that they wanted. He referred to the Congress declaration of the fundamental rights and stated that the swaraj that they were working for, would be a swaraj for the poor. He appealed to all present to join the Congress and strengthen it for winning swaraj. He then besought the audience for their blessings in his efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity for which purpose he was leaving for Delhi the next day.

Abdul Ghaffar, with a small party of nineteen Red Shirts, arrived in Bombay by steamer from Karachi on April 4. On landing he was garlanded and received by over a thousand persons and taken in a big procession, headed by the Red Shirts with bag-pipes and drums and a

Muslim volunteer corps. Decorated cars and trucks awaited to convey him and his companions, but he preferred to walk in the procession through the city. During his two-day stay in Bombay, he addressed a dozen meetings, advocated Hindu-Muslim unity, exhorted the Muslims to join the Congress, and attempted to clear the misunderstanding about the Pathans. At ten in the night he addressed a meeting in the Dongri Maidan, the locality where the Pathans mostly lived. Addressing the audience of about ten thousand, he said:

"Dear brothers, I am an ordinary man. You should not have very high opinion about me. Since people have got in the habit of estimating others very highly, today we are in a hopeless condition, especially the Muslims. Whenever any person shows his great regard towards me, I feel ashamed and fail to see anything extraordinary done by me. We, Indians, do not know how to serve, and hence if anyone does a little, we praise him to the skies. I always say that whatever I have done, it is the duty of every Muslim to do.

"I am not a speaker. I do not know to talk, but I know how to act. I want to tell you what the Afghan nation and the North-West Frontier Province is and why this hostile propaganda against the Pathans and our province is being carried out. The Britishers have not only in India but throughout the world disgraced the Frontier people. You may be reading articles in the newspapers against the Frontier, and speeches delivered from various platforms. If you ask the editor of any newspaper, or any leader, as to whether he has seen the Frontier and whether he knows about their mode of living and culture, whether he had ever lived amongst the Afghans, the answer would be in the negative. The Indian leaders and the journalists know nothing about the Frontier, but they always make lengthy speeches and write articles about the Frontier and its people. I tell you that it is all the propaganda of the British. The Britishers realized that the Afghans are a martial race. We could not realize our position in the beginning, but our enemy knew our spirit, so they first of all tried to defame the Afghans amongst the people of India. You may have read in the newspapers about the dacoities committed there, but I tell you that these dacoities are political dacoities. These dacoities never take place in the houses of the Hindus alone, but the Muslims are also looted. Why information about looting the Hindus is only given, you can understand best! The British, in spite of having so many aeroplanes and machine-guns, could not protect us and dacoities were committed. Their motive is that we people of the Frontier should remain always in fear of the Afghans and look to the British for help and continue to be their slaves. I do not claim that all the members of the Afghan nation are good. In other nations too there are good people as

well as bad people. Similar is the case with the Afghans. The Pathans made great sacrifices in the fight for freedom in 1930, they went to jails in large numbers and did not allow the civil disobedience movement to die. The British tried to crush the movement in the Frontier Province and they failed. The British know for the last hundred years that if the Frontier people joined the Indians in the fight for freedom, then their power will become doubled. This was the secret which you and we did not know. The British knew it and that is why they defamed us in the eyes of the Indians. I would appeal to my Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Christian and Jew brothers to think over and get rid of the wrong ideas regarding the Afghans.

"I am tired and had no rest the whole day, therefore, I will not go in details. Nor is it necessary that I should speak on Congress affairs at great length. The chief thing is to follow the directions of the Congress. If we talk the whole night and do not act, then our talk is futile. I was amazed when I learnt from my Muslim brothers that the Congress is a *jamat* of the Hindus. In fact, the Congress is a *jamat* in which there are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians and it is called the Indian National Congress and its objective is to free India and to feed the starving Indians and to clothe them. I am sorry that it was the work of the Muslims which has been taken up by the others. I ask the Muslims whether India is their country or not and if swaraj came will they share in it or not? Will they not ask for their rights? If the Muslims say that it is not their country and their dear Britishers go from here, will they also go away with them? I say they should ask them whether they will allow them to board the same steamer, as I think they will not allow the black men to be with them on the same steamer. If this country is yours, then similarly it belongs to Hindus, Pathans, Sikhs and Christians also. I ask you whether is it not your duty to serve the country? I also want to point out to you that the communities which do not act according to times, perish. I tell you that no power in the world can stop this movement and India will be free. When India will be free and you and I will be in this country, would you not be ashamed of your position if you have not worked for swaraj? It is a disgraceful thing to say that the Congress is of Hindus. The object of the Congress is to free India and destroy this despotic Government. I tell you that you have forgotten the teachings of your Prophet. I ask you what *jehad* is. According to the teachings of the Prophet, *jehad* is to say the truth before the tyrant kings. If we are Muslims, then we should act on the sayings of our Prophet. You should study the Koran and see what it teaches as far as slavery is concerned. You should ask your *maulvis* whether slavery is a disgrace or not. We should realize that today we are slaves. The Congress is trying

to free us all. Do you not like to be free from this slavery? Today the flag of freedom is in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi —what a shame it is! This flag of freedom ought to have been in the hands of the Muslims, we should have led the movement and the nations of the world should have followed us. The Prophet teaches us to help the oppressed people and destroy the tyrants. Today the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians are the oppressed people and the tyrant is the Government, which has deprived us all of all the rights in our country. The Muslims should help the oppressed people, if they want to lead an honourable life in this world. You may have read the story of the Israel and Prophet Moses in the Koran. When Prophet Moses exhorted the Israels to come forward and oppose the tyrant, they replied that they were weak and could not face the enemy. The result was that for forty years they had to live under slavery. It was due to their lethargy and lack of faith in God. Islam teaches us the sovereignty of God over the world. It is the duty of the Muslims to spread the doctrine of unity of God throughout the world. We have failed in this. Those nations which became lethargic, have lost everything in this world. If you want to live in this world with honour, then awake and organize your community. You should help your brothers and remove the tyrant government, which is dominating over us all. Why do you say that the Hindus are twenty-two crores and the Muslims are seven crores? I say there is no question of minority and majority in the world, but what is required is quality. In India there are only three hundred thousand Britishers, but they are ruling over thirty-two crores of Indians. All curious ideas in the minds of the Muslims are fostered by this Government. It is no question of minority or majority, but if you gain sufficient strength by organizing yourselves, then you will get everything you demand. The way which you have adopted, will lead you to disastrous end, as other nations perished in the past. Those nations which make efforts can only live in this world. If you want to preserve yourselves in the world then organize yourselves and free your country. Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians are all oppressed. Our religion teaches us to help the oppressed, which is not done by us, but we fight among ourselves. I ask you, who is making us do this? I assure you that it is being instigated by the Britishers. In 1915 we were all on the side of the Government when it was necessary to stop the dacoities. Not a single night passed in our part of the country when there were not five or six dacoities committed. When once one Miss Ellis was kidnapped by the Afridis, then the British left no stone unturned to bring her back, and since then they have taken precautions and no woman has been kidnapped. They spent thousands of rupees over this incident and they got the kidnappers killed. Why this? The same Government does

nothing for us. They are concerned only about their own safety. I wish to tell the Government that if they cannot preserve peace, they should hand over power to us and we will show that we can keep peace. I want to warn you that efforts are being made here to make the Hindus and the Muslims fight among themselves. As long as the Round Table Conference is not convened, efforts will be made to make us fight amongst ourselves. With this objective they have made truce with us.

"Muslims object to music being played before the mosque. And if it is played, the Islam of Muslims disappears. Hindus complain of the falling of a leaf of *pipal* tree. What is this all! I say there is no religion for a slave. When there was martial law in our place, nobody could give *azan* there. Religion is destroyed if music is played before a mosque or a leaf of *pipal* tree falls down. As far as I have studied the Koran and the Gita, religion is love. I am ready to go further and declare that he who has prejudices in his mind cannot be a human being! (Somebody interrupted and asked what happened in Cawnpur and Benares.) My Muslim brothers do not know how to sit in a public meeting. I admit that many riots took place and also in Benares and Cawnpur. (Here there was again some uproar.) I would appeal to you always to be at a safe distance from such persons. These people disguised in Islamic attire, deceive us and excite the people. I say what happened and what would happen in future is all due to the British. If there is any Muslim then he should come forward and first drive away the British from India.

"Now I conclude. I feel grieved to speak more. One man stands and blames the Hindus for oppressions. I have read a book which can tell you what the British had done in Turkey. There they had killed innocent children, outraged the modesty of women and committed various sorts of oppressions. Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan suffered most. Who has done that? It was done by the British. Perhaps, the British may be our relatives. Who is our enemy—the Hindus who live with us? I say if seven crores of Muslims are united then they can save the Islamic countries. My Muslim brothers, I am not a leader and neither I wish that you should cry '*jai*' for me. I have already told you that I am a soldier. I am not dependent on any one. God has given me money; I eat my bread to work for the nation. People disguised in Islamic dress come and make the Hindus and the Muslims fight. People attired in Hindu dress come and say that a branch of the *pipal* was cut by Muslims and excite the Hindus to fight with the Muslims. The third power does not want that we should become brothers; and when we become brothers then we cannot be slaves. You have achieved success over a mighty Government and now that the time of success has come, the Government wish to divide you and turn the success into defeat. What I think I have told

you. I am a native of another province; the Red Shirts who have resolved to free the motherland will now give a salute."

Addressing the women's gathering on April 5th, Abdul Ghaffar paid a tribute to the women of Bombay for their role in the national movement and added that the Pathan women were equally brave and had played a very important part in the last civil disobedience movement. In spite of the fact that the Muslim women observed purdah, they did not lag behind. But he felt that purdah custom did prove a hindrance in their way. He referred to the Muslim women's role in the past, as recorded in the Islamic history. It showed that they had always participated in the national struggle and held that the correct conception of the purdah in Islam was not to restrict the field of women's activities or to prevent them from participating in the national struggle. He urged that necessary reform should be made in the present custom to enable the Muslim women to participate in the life of the nation.

The Pathans hold women folk in great honour, he stressed. A Pathan will do anything to save the honour of a woman. Even Miss Ellis who was abducted by some tribesmen, was not treated badly by them. That showed their fine sense of chivalry. But it was a pity that the English people who talked so much of chivalry, did not show any regard for women when they had to deal with our brave women warriors in the non-violent war.

In conclusion he said that by their sacrifices Indian women had safeguarded their rights in any future constitution of India, and the Frontier people who were fighting for India's freedom, would stand for women's rights and see that they were recognized by the nation.

Before his departure for Delhi Abdul Ghaffar addressed a mass meeting of the Muslims. He said that misleading interpretations were put on the speech that he delivered the previous day. His reference to the play of music before mosques was interpreted to mean that he had no objection to it. What he wanted to convey was that Muslims and Hindus had no business to fight over such insignificant matters, while they were both in bondage. When freedom was won, there would be no occasion for such communal brickerings. It was the presence of the third party in the country that always fostered a spirit of animosity between the two communities.

In Delhi, where the All-India Muslim Conference was then in session, Gandhi conferred with the leaders to bring about an agreement, but he failed. The conference proclaimed itself uncompromisingly in favour of separate electorates and unqualified in its opposition to the Congress. Shaukat Ali, referring to the Muslim demands, remarked: "These were formulated at the Muslim Conference on January 1, 1929. Later on the

Muslim League accepted them *in toto* and since then they began to be called Jinnah's fourteen points. We stand by them today."

From Delhi, Gandhi issued a statement in which he pointed out that his view on the Hindu-Muslim question was that of full surrender to any unanimously expressed wish of Muslims and Sikhs. Before he cultivated the Hindu opinion, he wanted to have that formula, but it had not been forthcoming. He also observed that he was unable to identify himself with any solution based on communalism. Abdul Ghaffar fully supported Gandhi.

Shaukat Ali and some others were in touch with the authorities. On April 8, Shaukat Ali saw Mr. Howell, the Foreign Secretary, in Delhi. Howell's confidential note in the Home Political file is revealing:

"Mr. Shaukat Ali came to see me this morning and I had a long talk with him. After general discussion of other topics he got on, at the end, the subject of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whom, I understand, he had been seeing in Delhi. He told that Abdul Ghaffar was not at all anxious to be identified, or too closely connected, with the Congress, and that he genuinely wanted peaceful relations with the official world, but that it had been the mishandling by the latter that had caused the trouble. I said that I naturally was unable to accept this version of events and that the present activities of Abdul Ghaffar and his lieutenants in the North-West Frontier seemed to me very little calculated to assist in the restoration of the peaceful conditions. In the course of conversation I said: 'If you have got any influence with Abdul Ghaffar, why can't you make him come out openly against any incitement to violence and check all this unnecessary agitation which is bound to lead to trouble, if it goes on indefinitely?' To which he at once replied: 'Why won't you let me go there? I could take two or three with me and we could point out to the people concerned how stupidly they are behaving.' I told him that I would certainly think it over, that my only anxiety was to see peaceful conditions established, but that I was also anxious not to add to the present mischief by any misunderstanding of the position of the Government. I had, for example, recently felt it my duty to dissuade Mr. Gandhi from going up there, and I was anxious not to expose Government to unfair attack, or to do damage, in other directions, by appearing to encourage a visit by himself. To this he replied with some warmth: 'Gandhi is not the friend of the Musalmans and he is not the friend of Government. We are prepared to help the Government in this matter, because we think our interests and theirs are the same.' I said I would think it over and mention it to Lord Willingdon, and he asked that a decision should be reached early as, if he went at all, he wanted to go at the end of the month.

"I have read the noting on these papers on the question, but I am none the less strongly inclined to let him go; indeed I see no particular reason for stopping him. The effective difference between his case and that of Mr. Gandhi is that if the latter went, the general impression throughout the North-West Frontier Province would be that we had to authorize Congress to assist us in carrying on the government. Incidentally, the excitement would no doubt be very much greater than in the case of Mr. Shaukat Ali, to whom the first objection taken does not, of course, apply. I should have supposed that a further justification for the discrimination of treatment, if Mr. Gandhi took objection, would be that all the arguments I put to him when he first raised the question had been infinitely strengthened by the general deterioration in Hindu-Muslim relations since Mr. Gandhi and I had discussed the matter. I should, therefore, subject to what may be said by Sir Fazl-i-Husain and Mr. Emerson, to each of whom I am sending a copy of this note, be in favour of letting him go. . ."

Side by side with the communal question the economic situation at this period began to display danger-signals, for the effect of the sustained fall in prices of agricultural commodities threatened to disrupt agricultural economy. The previous agricultural season had been good and harvests plentiful, the difficulty was that surplus produce could either not be sold at all or sold only at abnormally low prices, and cultivators and tenants had indeed serious difficulty in finding the cash with which to meet their obligations of rent or revenues. The twenty fundamental objects of the Congress adopted at the Karachi Congress in March included the reduction of land revenue by fifty per cent and total relief to the small owners. The Congress vigorously agitated for the reduction of land revenue all over India, and particularly in Gujarat, the United Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province. The Government were planning to take drastic action against Jawaharlal Nehru and Abdul Ghaffar. Gandhi informed the Government telegraphically in April: "I observe there is inspired agitation against Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He left on me at Karachi an impression for being quite sincere in his profession of non-violence. If there are complaints against him, would like to have them so as to enable me approach him. Believe him amenable reason. It would be embarrassing if he were arrested without giving me opportunity getting explanation from him. Lord Irwin's wish that I should not go to Frontier Province is additional cause anxiety for me. Feel sure my presence there must have sobering effect."

At a special meeting of the Central Jirga of the North-West Frontier Province held at Utmanzai under the presidentship of Abdul Ghaffar, the following resolution was passed in early May:

"This meeting endorses the Gandhi-Irwin truce and declares that the Afghan Jirga have been earnestly trying to maintain a peaceful atmosphere created by the Delhi pact, but regrets that the local government has failed to implement the terms of the truce in a genuine spirit.

"This meeting invites the special attention of all jirgas in the N.-W. Frontier Province to concentrate their full energies on the manufacture of khadi for meeting the local demands and on the Hindu-Muslim unity, on which only the nation's success depends.

"It is the considered opinion of the jirga that if the measure of reforms introduced in the local bodies of the province falls short of the demands of the people, they will ever remain unsatisfied till they are put on a par with the rest of India.

"And as regards the future form of government in this province, the jirga is of the opinion that the proposals made by the sub-committee of the Round Table Conference are not acceptable to the inhabitants of the province."

Gandhi bade farewell to Lord Irwin, the retiring Viceroy, in Bombay on April 18 and soon he was expected to see his successor, Lord Willingdon. The Secretariat of the Government of India informed the Chief Commissioner of the Frontier Province: "Gandhi will probably be coming to Simla about May 11. Viceroy will probably see him and, in any case, Emerson will have a talk with him. In previous talks, Emerson has deliberately avoided more than casual discussion of the Frontier affairs. If no understanding has been reached locally with Abdul Ghaffar, this may no longer be possible now that Gandhi has specifically raised the Frontier question. In any case, Government of India were already clear that in the last resort, Gandhi's aid might legitimately be invoked to control Abdul Ghaffar who is his professional adherent, and that, consequently, before any measures are taken against Abdul Ghaffar or his organization, it would only be fair to inform Gandhi beforehand. They would, however, of course, much prefer that understanding with Abdul Ghaffar Khan should be reached by you without Gandhi's intervention. If discussion of the Frontier affairs with Gandhi becomes necessary, it is suggested that Emerson might take the following line:

"(a) To inform Gandhi of activities and speeches of Abdul Ghaffar and recruitment of Red Shirts and explain peculiar dangers of such in the Frontier region.

"(b) To warn him that unless Abdul Ghaffar, on his part, dissociates himself from propaganda of incitement to violence, such as the Babra play, and impresses similar attitude on his lieutenants, continuance of these activities is certain to lead to tribal trouble, sooner or later, and that Government may consequently be compelled to eradicate source

of trouble by taking action under the Criminal Law Amendment Act or otherwise against Abdul Ghaffar and his organization.

"(c) Gandhi will probably then suggest his visit to the province. He would be definitely discouraged. He would be asked to advise Abdul Ghaffar by letter, firstly, to see you and to keep in touch with you and your officers; secondly, to stop making speeches or, at any rate, to make fewer speeches and less open to objection. . ."

"The Chief Commissioner made every effort to get into touch with Abdul Ghaffar Khan, both personally and through his local officers, but every offer made to see the Chief Commissioner was refused," complained the Frontier authorities. On the contrary, Abdul Ghaffar Khan went about the province in defiance of orders forbidding public meetings and held meeting after meeting, and each of his speeches showed an increasing spirit of racial hatred and rebellion. He said quite openly that his object was to turn the British out of India."

Soon after his interview with Lord Willingdon, Gandhi summoned Abdul Ghaffar and Jawaharlal Nehru to Bardoli for discussion. Sardar Patel, Devadas Gandhi and a few friends were present at the station, when Abdul Ghaffar emerged from a third-class railway compartment. "I did not intend to inform you of my arrival," he said, "but Bardoli being a new place to me I could not but send you a telegram." His kit consisted of a handbag, containing a single change of clothes and papers, but no bedding. The first thing he told the Sardar was that he had not allowed friends to fix up any engagements for him for the time being, as he would be placing himself at Gandhi's disposal and would return only when he got leave. The moment he reached Swaraj Ashram, with his winning manners he put everybody at ease. He was very happy that he was summoned to Bardoli, a place he had longed to see ever since it became famous in 1928.

Within a few minutes of his arrival he was speaking with great passion against those who "have reduced Islam to a matter of *houris* and *ghilmas*." Islam, he emphasized, meant submission to the will of God, serving Him through service of his creatures, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, and striving ceaselessly for truth and justice.

Talking about the conditions under the truce, he told the ashram inmates: "We have at present suspended practically all our activities, in obedience to Gandhiji. Although we enrol Khudai Khidmatgars, their activity, apart from a little picketing, is practically nil. The only general programme is that in every village, wherever the movement exists, our workers are enjoined to assemble once every week after the *juma* prayers. The volunteers are given lessons in drill and told to do nothing that is likely to go against the settlement arrived at between the Congress and

the Government. We have gone so far as to prohibit the shouting of all slogans, which are likely to offend against the spirit of the settlement. Still a great deal of provocation is offered from the other side. A month ago about a dozen young students were arrested in Charsadda for staging a drama, which was considered objectionable. We are defending the case, and I am legally advised that there is nothing incriminating in the play itself. But the arrests were the least part of the provocation. These arrests were carried out under huge military display. Armoured cars and troops forcibly dispossessed the poor people of fodder and other articles of use, causing great distress among them. Some troops drove into bylanes on horseback. This was rightly resented by the people. It is again Gandhiji's discipline that the Frontier people have placed themselves under, that restrained them on this occasion. Cases have occurred after the truce, of troops entering private houses and taking the inmates unawares. This is a form of provocation for which, with all our experience of the last year, we were hardly prepared."

Devadas Gandhi inquired how long he thought non-violence would be kept up in his province. Abdul Ghaffar replied: "I am sure, we shall prove to be the best disciples of Gandhiji in the whole of India. We are prepared for any amount of suffering. Gandhiji must come as soon as he can and see things for himself. I want him to come into direct touch with my people in the Frontier. He must come there and speak to the people himself and give them his instructions."

Could this non-violence be a mere expediency, what about the propaganda carried on by the Anglo-Indian papers, against the "Red Shirt" movement, saying that its object is to carry out a violent offensive against the British? Abdul Ghaffar observed:

"My non-violence has almost become a matter of faith with me. I believed in Gandhiji's ahimsa long before. But the unparallelled success of the experiment in my province, has made me a confirmed champion of non-violence. God willing, I hope never to see my province take to violence. We know only too well the bitter results of violence from the blood feuds which spoil our fair name. We indeed have an abundance of violence in our nature. It is good in our own interests, to take training in non-violence. Moreover, is not the Pathan amenable only to love and reason? He will go with you to hell, but you cannot force him even to go to heaven. Such is the power of love over the Pathan! I want the Pathan to learn to do unto others as he would like to be done by. It may be that I may fail and a wave of violence may sweep over my province. I will then be content to take the verdict of fate against me. But it will not shake my ultimate faith in non-violence, which my people need more than anybody else."

Accompanied by Devadas Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar toured the Bardoli villages on June 6. He congratulated the villagers on the heroic suffering they had gone through and comforted them by saying that his own province also had similarly suffered. He did not in the least regret the terrible suffering. It is even human to dislike those who had been responsible for carrying on a reign of terror but that was not how he liked to look at it. He felt that God had put them on their mettle.

Of all the villages, Vedchhi had attracted his attention most. At the end of the day's tour he remarked to Devadas: "I wish that the workers' and the peasants' parties could take a leaf from Vedchhi. The work done there, is far more important than all our voluminous output of talk and writing on the question of the amelioration of the masses." Vedchhi had lived up to its reputation and transformed the lives of the neighbouring Raniparaj villagers, who adopted universal use of khadi and prohibition. It was this solid work that appealed to him most.

"I am only a soldier, pray, do not make a leader of me," he told the ashram inmates, when they asked him to address a public meeting. But at last he was persuaded to speak at a joint gathering of the Hindus and Muslims, presided over by Kasturba Gandhi:

"I am greatly surprised that the very name of the Congress scares away some of my Muslim brethren. They think the Congress is a Hindu organization and that, therefore, they may have nothing to do with it. There never was a more incorrect description of a body which is essentially national in character. I appeal to my brethren to study the aims, objects, rules and constitution of the Congress. Briefly, the Congress aims at liberating the people from slavery and exploitation, or in other words, the Congress aims at being able to feed India's hungry millions and to clothe India's naked millions. I want you to read the history of Islam and ask you to consider what the Prophet's mission was. It was to free the oppressed, to feed the poor and to clothe the naked. And, therefore, the work of the Congress is nothing but the work of the Prophet, nothing inconsistent with Islam. Seeing this as clearly as day-light, I really do not understand how Muslims can remain aloof from the Congress.

"Then we come to the creed of non-violence. Surely there is nothing surprising in a Musalman or a Pathan like me, subscribing to the creed. It is not a new creed. It was followed fourteen hundred years ago by the Prophet, all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off the oppressor's yoke. But we had so far forgotten it that when Mahatma Gandhi placed it before us, we thought that he was sponsoring a new creed or a novel weapon. To him belongs the credit of being the first among us to revive a forgotten creed and to place it before a nation for the redress of its grievances.

"To the Hindus and Muslims I would say that this fight for freedom is for the liberation of both. The Hindus are obliging none by taking part in the struggle, and the Muslims will oblige none by joining the Hindus. There are influences enough to divide us. You in India are familiar with cry of the Afghan bogy. We have been made familiar of late with the cry of a Hindu rule —a rule of the rich Hindu, of the educated Hindu, of the nationalist Hindu. To those who come to warn me against a Hindu rule, I say, perhaps, it may be better to be slaves under a neighbour than under a perfect stranger!"

Warning Signals

1931

Gandhi accompanied by Abdul Ghaffar proceeded to Bombay to attend a Working Committee meeting on June 9. He was against proceeding to London, unless the Hindu-Muslim question was first solved in India. The committee decided that all the other conditions being favourable, Gandhi should represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference.

Abdul Ghaffar stayed with Gandhi. The Pathans of Bombay turned up in large numbers. They did obeisance by kissing his hand and then sat around him, some of them for hours. He exhorted them to develop a sense of responsibility and live as peaceful citizens. Their expression of loyalty to him was touching. But the public meeting at Dongri in the night of June 9, left a bitter taste in his mouth. He attended the meeting only as a matter of duty—his heart was not in it. He had come to know earlier in the day that there was likely to be a disturbance of some kind at the meeting. He would have abstained from attending the meeting, but then he could not do so without causing great disappointment. The disturbance during his speech and the murder in cold blood of an innocent Hindu, who had been drawn to the meeting by the announcement that Jawaharlal Nehru and others would be speaking, was a sickening experience for him. He gave expression to his pain and sorrow in the following words:

"I am sorry to see this hostile demonstration. Is it by such unmannerly conduct that you wish to welcome us, your guests of the evening? Don't you realize that such conduct can only bring discredit upon you? This kind of behaviour will lead you to ruin. I earnestly beseech you to ponder what you are doing. It is not thus that you will carry conviction to anybody. This is not how Islam has taught you to behave!"

It was from a sense of deep humiliation that he spoke. He had also heard that very day the malicious accusation that Muslims received bribes from the Congress. He resented this charge bitterly and spoke with scathing sarcasm:

"I would ask Muslims to seriously consider their position in view of this charge levelled against them. It amounts to this that, assuming the accusation to be true, we Muslims have no conscience, no patriotism of our own. We work for money and we serve the Congress for money, for those who pay us. We serve the Government for money and we serve Congress for money. What a sorry figure we cut! Such is the meaning

of the libel. If you think that the libel is undeserved, then what are you doing for the liberation of your country? What did Islam come into this world for? To help the afflicted, the downtrodden, to bring food and clothes to the needy. Have we followed this teaching of Islam? The English rule over us all. They need no help from you. They are not downtrodden. Yet we have been only too eager to stand by the Government and have woefully neglected our duty towards our own brethren, the Hindus, whom we have allowed to carry on the fight for liberty almost single-handed. This is the very negation of the teaching of Islam, which asks us always to side with the weaker party. Muslims are bound by their faith to assist in every just campaign of liberty. And indeed, we ought to be the torch-bearers in the country's struggle for independence. A lesser position is inconsistent with our traditions and the teachings of our religion. And yet how we Muslims have acquitted ourselves? Very poorly, indeed!"

In conclusion he said: "We, young Afghans, hundreds of thousands of us, are disgusted with slavery and we cannot bear this disgrace any longer. We want freedom. A Muslim can never be a slave. We want to oppose the tyrant and liberate the oppressed. Islam has taught us this and the Prophet also acted upon it. If any Parsi or Sikh brother comes forward to oppose the British, then we shall side with the Parsi or the Sikh. If any Hindu opposes the British, then we shall be with him. And if a Muslim seeks our help for the same purpose, so much the better—let him come forward. I now conclude my speech. You cannot harm me, but you will harm yourself. If you want my services, I am ready, otherwise I don't care. You should do something to avoid occurrence of such incidents, because it is a disgrace for the Muslim community."

Accompanied by Devadas he went to Ahmedabad to see Satyagraha Ashram. During his short visit to the city, he stayed at the ashram. In a public meeting on June 14, he said:

"I had an ardent desire to visit the ashram. But man proposes and God disposes. However, at last, I seized this opportunity and am overjoyed to see you all here. You all being men of action, need not be told anything. I am not a leader, neither wish to be one. I am an ordinary sepoy. I used to read the reports in jail with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. I was grieved on account of atrocities committed on our women. I thought that we, thirty-five crores of people, were not men but dummies, because we witnessed such atrocities without a murmur. And I was glad because the days of the Government which perpetrates these atrocities, are certainly numbered. This Government will not continue long, but will not be ousted by speeches and applause; you must be up and doing. This Government yields to power. If it sees that you are well

organized, it will redress your grievances. If you kiss the English, they will kick you, so you must be well organized and there should be complete harmony between the Hindus and Muslims. We Afghans helped the English to loot Delhi, attack Baghdad and Jerusalem, but you know that we got in return the Frontier Crimes Regulation, which is like a slow poison to us. We never had a chance even to exchange views. Now, even our children are eager to join the revolution. The English used to threaten us that India is well organized and if the Pathans raise their hands, the Indians would at once subdue them. In the same way, they told the Indians that the Pathans are very powerful and would invade India. But you know that we also are human beings. We are slaves and want to be free. To achieve the goal we all must strive together. For the time being a truce prevails, but we must hold ourselves in readiness for the future. Because there is truce, we should not sit idle. If the Round Table Conference fails, the fight will be renewed, and it is our duty, therefore, to be prepared. I am enrolling volunteers and I will help any community—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi or Sikh—in the struggle for independence. I advise Hindus and Muslims not to fight among themselves. It matters very little, whether there is a Hindu or Muslim raj. When we are all slaves, we must do away with slavery and banish the English. I should also advise you to observe strict discipline. We should not mind whether the Government disregards the terms of the truce. We must not fail in our duty."

Devadas then took him on a tour of villages in the Borsad district and Baroda state, where he addressed meetings. In the third week of June he left for the Frontier Province and, on the way, addressed meetings in Ajmer and Delhi. Speaking at Ajmer on June 21, he said:

"I am no leader, and in saying this I do not belittle myself. Wherever I go, I have to perform the two duties—to participate in a procession arranged for me and to address meetings. I don't like either. The nations that talk too much, have never done any solid work. You will not win swaraj through speeches. The people that stand up to serve their country sincerely and in the name of God, must surely succeed. I wish to tell the Muslims that the present movement is the same that was started by the Prophet at Mecca. There is a fight between the oppressor and the oppressed, just as there was in his time. Is India to be only for Hindus? No, it is for both the communities. You should stand united. You have not properly studied the British. They cause communal friction among the Hindus and Muslims. We have thoroughly understood the British. We have even hoisted their flag in sacred places. The more you flatter them, the more they will disgrace you. The British claim to bring civilization to India, but they have shot even peaceful pickets in the Frontier

Province. This was what we got in exchange for our services to them. We started the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. The British started the propaganda that we were disloyal, so that we might not work unitedly. They, therefore, called us the 'Red Shirts'. Our movement has spread rapidly, and they want to become our friends now. A gentleman whose identity I do not want to disclose, told me that he had recommended us to the Viceroy. I laughed at him, because when we became strong the British would themselves become our friends. They have now become our cousins. If we are strong enough, surely every one will accede to our demands. The Britishers are demoralized. Increase your strength and continue the struggle, and then you will surely succeed."

Speaking at Delhi on June 23rd, he first requested the press not to misrepresent him. "I would say a few words about the English newspapers and particularly *The Times of India*," he said, "which gave quite a different colour to the speech I delivered at Ahmedabad. This paper has published in bold headings that I wish to wreck the British rule, but it has not mentioned why I wish this and why the Afghans are anti-British. We have also rendered great services to this Government. We attacked Delhi, Baghdad, Jerusalem and even Mecca at their behest. Besides, I also wish to point out this to you that if any special delicacy reached us, we did not eat it ourselves, nor gave it to our wives or our children, but we took it to Englishmen and said, 'You eat it.' But in return they gave us the Frontier Crimes Regulation. Let me cite just one case of Habib Nur who was promptly hanged without trial, for trying to shoot a British Assistant-Commissioner who had committed atrocities on the Khudai Khidmatgars. Can you ever imagine that such laws can be enforced even on the wildest people these days? Reforms have been introduced in the whole of India, but we have been deprived of them. It is only now that we have understood the British. But I do not know whether you have also understood them or not, because you have great friendship with them."

"The nature of Englishman is very peculiar," he said. "If you flatter him, he will mercilessly kick you out of his bungalow and will shout, 'Go away blackie,' but if you organize yourself and demand your rights then it is his nature to submit to you. I said in my speech that we have understood the British and our little children have also turned against them. I would cite an example. On the 29th May we went to a Frontier village for propaganda work and met a little boy who wanted to enlist himself. I asked the boy where I should enter his name. He replied, 'in *Inquilab*'. On this I looked at the Inspector of Police, who was accompanying us, and told him to enter it in his diary that even a Pathan child wishes '*Inquilab*'. I said only this much, but he made a big story out

of it. I had told the Muslims that if they wished to join the British and crush this movement, they would not succeed. The Englishman has now become tired. He cannot remain any longer. How can he remain here when a faithful community like Pathans with their children and women folk have also gone against him? The British will submit and very soon he will see what the '*Inquilab*' will be like. There is no power on earth that can stop the '*Inquilab*' that you are seeing today."

"I wish to request you, my Muslim brethren, to which the Hindus should also listen", he continued. "I wish to ask you that you often all say that Asia is a spiritual land. What does your religion teach you? Has any religion taught any nation to be a slave? I say that the basic principle of every religion is freedom. It teaches to help the oppressed, to wage war against the tyrants. Is it incumbent on a Muslim, according to his religion, to be a slave of an Englishman or whether he should be free? We, Afghans, have hitherto only learnt to be the slaves of Englishmen, but today we are anxious to get rid of this slavery. May I ask you if your religion teaches you to be free, what steps have you taken to get rid of slavery? What efforts have you made to attain this end? What constructive work you are doing today for freedom? When we, Afghans, had no organization, had no unity, when the political movement had no strength, nobody took any notice of us. Now that we have done some work and attained strength, the English ask us, 'What do you want, why are you angry with us?' Whatever you get, you get through strength. Nations can only live if they have strength. Study your Koran, which cites examples of the degenerate nations losing their existence because of their cowardly, debauched and luxurious lives. You should create the spirit of freedom, love for the nation amongst young men, and you will attain power through such youth. The Englishman has now become tired and he cannot remain here. He can hardly protect himself, how can he protect you? This country belongs both to you and the Hindus. You all should work together and free the motherland from the curse of slavery."

In the third week of June, Abdul Ghaffar returned to the Frontier Province. On June 25 a Khudai Khidmatgar meeting was held at Deh Bahadur in his honour. The audience numbered over six thousand, of whom three thousand were Red Shirts and two hundred were women. He referred to the arrests of his two colleagues and remarked that the Government were breaking the terms of the truce. They wanted to provoke people to violence, so that they might have some excuse for suppressing the movement. He warned the people against resorting to violence. He exhorted them strictly to adhere to the terms of the truce. They had already shaken the foundations of the Government. He asked

the police reporters to note down his words accurately and convey them to the authorities. The people were no more afraid of jails and machine-guns. The work that they have started, would have to be completed. He pleaded that the women too should join the movement.

He moved from place to place in the Frontier Province, rousing the enthusiasm of the people and organizing the Khudai Khidmatgars. He addressed meetings at midnight, at noon and in the morning, calling on the people to act. The people lionized their Badshah Khan, came in numbers to listen to him from long distances, got solace from his sight. Their love for him was unbounded. The people began to regard Fakhr-e-Afghan as a saint. The wells at which he drank water, were quickly emptied by besieging crowds, who used the water for curing diseases. His sight was considered a medicine against many ills. He discouraged this sort of expression of faith in him. In the public meetings he said: "There are two objects in view: to liberate the country and to feed the starving and clothe the naked. Independence is Islam, and Islam is independence. Do not rest till independence is achieved, no matter if you are subjected to bomb and cannon and guns. Offer a front against the British, who are a source of trouble. Distinguish between friend and foe. The Congress is a national and not a Hindu organization. It is a jirga comprised of the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, Christians and Parsis. It is working against the British domination. The British nation is the enemy of the Congress and the Pathans. I, therefore, have joined the Congress, and you too should work with it. The British should not be allowed to foster disunity among the people."

He received tremendous response from the Pakhtuns. Almost every member of his family worked in the national movement, including his sister, who addressed mass meetings. Dr. Khan Sahib put all his energy in the movement. The Government was panicky—they tried to sow dissension, offer reforms, start rival organizations, misrepresent the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and use force, and even to win over the Khan brothers through the influential Muslim leaders. They wanted Abdul Ghaffar to disown the Congress. They wanted him to stop his tours.

One of the miracles he brought about in the Frontier Province, was the awakening among the women. In reply to an address presented by the women of Bhaizai, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"My sisters—I thank you for your loving address. This is the first occasion that I am feeling a peculiar sort of pleasure, because whenever I went to India and saw the national awakening and patriotism of the Hindu and the Parsi women, I used to say to myself, would such a time come when our Pakhtun women would also awake and gird up their loins for national service? I had cherished this longing since long. Thank

God, today, I see my desire being fulfilled. It is due to His grace that our ignorant and illiterate females are prepared for any sacrifice in the cause of national service.

"God makes no distinction between men and women. If someone can surpass another, it is only through good deeds and morals. If you study history, you will see that there were many scholars and poets amongst women. It is a grave mistake we have made in degrading women. If you shake off your lethargy, tour in the villages and awaken your ignorant and oppressed sisters, it will raise your status.

"It is due to the services of Khudai Khidmatgars that the Pathans are held in high esteem everywhere. They are your children and your brothers. Let me congratulate every sister and mother whose brothers and children have put on the red uniform and have girt up their loins for national service.

"If you study the history of Islam, you will find that men and women have served Islam alike. You should, therefore, join us in this national service. If we achieve success and liberate the motherland, we solemnly promise you that you will get your rights. In the Holy Koran you have an equal share with men. You are today oppressed because we men have ignored the commands of God and the Prophet. Today we are the followers of *rawaj*, custom, and we oppress you. But thank God that we have realized that our gain and loss, progress and downfall, are common. You should know that your condition will improve if you gird up your loins with us for national service."

Addressing a meeting in a mosque in Kohat on July 9, he remarked: "I want to explain to you who these Red Shirts are and why they are dressed in red. Some mullahs have decided that those who wear the red dress cannot say their prayers in it. This is meant to curry favour with the British. I ask, what is wrong with this dress? We are prepared to wear any dress that the mullahs prescribe, if that helps us in our fight for freedom. It is mentioned in the Koran and also said by the Prophet that a slave nation is a curse in the world. Every religion stands for freedom, peace and equality. These Red Shirts, Khudai Khidmatgars, serve God and nation. They are wearing the red dress not for getting a couple of hundred rupees from the Government, but for serving the nation as a *mujahid*. Every army has got its uniform. So the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Servants of God, have their distinctive dress."

On July 19, he addressed the Jamiat-ul-Ulema session at Meerut. His speech, which the Government thought objectionable and deserving prosecution, was as follows:

"It is a common allegation against the Musalmans that they lack intelligence. See what path the Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis are

following and look to your doings. There are men of different shades of opinion among the Hindu, Sikh and Parsi brethren, but I have never noticed this exchange of abuses, this dissension, this disparaging of each other and this disgrace which is noticeable today among the Muslims. If you lack education, you have at least eyes to see. Open them and see what the other communities are doing and what you are doing. Just look at the civility and politeness evinced by members of other communities and see the love and courtesy with which they treat each other. Then look at the habits and actions of your brethren and your leaders. I have reflected over the present condition of the Muslims and have arrived at the conclusion that they as a class, are men of discordant views. In the case of other communities also you would find men holding conflicting views, but they do not indulge in this sort of abuses and verbal fights. Why? Because, they have before them a goal, which they have to reach. There are amongst them also men of different shades of opinion, but they have all a common goal to attain. I do not want to define it, but I would simply reiterate that the root cause of the sad state of affairs among the Muslims, is the absence of a common goal. Search your hearts. Do you want to perpetuate slavery in India? Is that your goal? If so, then you would be inflicting harm on no one but yourselves. The Muslims have no common goal; hence, this strife and controversy. This weighs heavily upon my heart. The Muslims demand separate electorates. They are crying for protection of their rights. I would like to tell them that they cannot obtain their rights by shouting or behaving in the way they are doing. It is a law that rights can be obtained through strength only. There was a time when the people of the Frontier Province had no strength and, consequently, neither the Muslim nor the Hindu brethren took any notice of them. No one felt any concern for us or rendered us any help. Today, when by the grace of God we have done substantial work in our province and when there are over a hundred thousand well disciplined volunteers among us, the Government is anxious to know what we want. Today even the Government has extended the hand of friendship to us, and every one is our friend. I would tell you plainly that the only thing in us, today, is power. So long as your present condition continues, you will never be able to protect your rights, even if they are conceded to you. You must acquire strength through constructive work. It cannot be acquired by speeches and resolutions. You must go from village to village with your message and work intensely among the people. You must work for the progress of your country.

"I must now point out another defect among the Muslims. They are inclined to torment even those who serve them selflessly. You can never

expect any encouragement from them. Such a community, therefore, cannot prosper.

"Some of my Musalman brethren say that the Frontier people have been influenced by the Hindus. Others say that the Hindus give them money. Such false allegations damage the interests of the country and of the community. We are participating in this movement because we want freedom by driving out the British. Only in the town of Peshawar we have a hundred thousand Khudai Khidmatgars. In Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan too there are many who do solid work. Only one of the two shall live here, we or those Englishmen who have ruined us spiritually, morally and economically. The English too are aware of this fact. Our aim is to drive away the Britishers from this country or perish. I have not been able to find any other party except the Congress, whose goal is to drive out the British from this country and help the downtrodden. Our goal is also the same.

"You might be inclined to ask, whence I got this idea. I would tell you that you find it in your sacred book, the Holy Koran. The Prophet came forth to help the oppressed and to deliver men from slavery. Is not serfdom a curse? I declare that the English are the tyrants, and the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis are the oppressed. These oppressed people have no country of their own, their country has been taken by force and deception. Read the life of the Prophet, turn over the pages of the Koran. We are in search of a party in co-operation with which we may destroy the oppressors. If you can point out any other party like the Congress, I am prepared to co-operate with it. We want freedom, we want to drive out the British from our country because they have exhausted our patience. We would, therefore, side with the party which has the same goal as we have.

"I am surprised to hear the people say that the Congress is a Hindu organization, the majority of Congressmen are Hindus. The majority of India's population is Hindus, and naturally they are in a majority in the national organization. When we discovered that there was only one organization which wanted to help the oppressed and to make India free and prosperous, we lent our co-operation to it. In addition to it, I would like to tell you that this British Government wants to destroy us. Our Khudai Khidmatgars are often killed. Some are stoned and others shot down. One respectable person told me that a police officer had asked him to kill me as I had no right to assume the position of a president. I was in search of a party which was desirous of freedom and which was prepared to save us from this tyrannical government. If there is any Muslim party which can save us and can march with us, carrying the banner of independence, we are ready to co-operate with it. But if

you want to say something else, then I tell you that we have decided to remain in the Congress. Every one of us—men, women and children, will oppose the English till our race becomes extinct or the English are driven out from India."

Perturbed over his outspoken speeches, his propaganda tour through the North-West Frontier Province and, especially, Kohat, the recruiting centre, the Frontier Government informed Lord Willingdon that, in case Abdul Ghaffar continued his Kohat tour, they would arrest him. On the Viceroy intimating Gandhi about it, Gandhi warned that, in that case, the truce would terminate. Gandhi asked for the Viceroy's permission to visit the Frontier Province to study the situation on the spot. The permission was not granted. He then suggested that Nehru should visit the province, but again the Viceroy turned down Gandhi's request. He further suggested the name of his own son, Devadas, who, with great difficulty, got the permission to visit the Frontier Province on the self-imposed condition that he would refrain from making any speeches or accepting any addresses. "The sole object in sending him was to promote peace and to avoid a catastrophe, if it is possible," wrote Gandhi. "His presence would also insure Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan responding to the Chief Commissioner's invitation."

Devadas Gandhi reached Peshawar in the last week of July, for a six-day study tour of the Frontier. Of this tour, Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"From Peshawar we started for Utmanzai in a truck. When we had passed Shahi Bagh, a friend's car, flying the national flag, approached us. We got down from the truck and shifted to the car. Two Khudai Khidmatgars, in their attractive red uniforms, occupied the front seats. Khurshedbehn, Devadas and I occupied the rear seats. On reaching Charsadda, we heard that Kazi, a notorious dacoit, who was waiting in the forest near Sardaryab bridge, fired shots at the truck. The truck was stopped and searched, and one occupant was found wounded in it. We met him at the Charsadda hospital and had a talk with him. In fact, Kazi was hired to shoot at us. The Naki Police Station had circulated the news that we had started in a truck. By God's grace we had shifted to the car and thus had been saved. I was told that when Kazi reached the Afridi territory, they killed him as his act was considered going against the Pakhtu traditions. 'The Pakhtuns would have been discredited in the eyes of the Indians.'

"Devadas toured the whole area with us and came to the conclusion that the Government was annoyed with us solely because of our work among the Pakhtuns.

"There was no Muslim League organization in our province. The British needed an agency to counteract our movement, and they helped

to start the Khaksar organization through Inayatullah Mashriqi, the headmaster of the Government High School at Peshawar. Due to the great popularity of the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Khaksars made no headway in the Frontier Province but spread in the other parts of India. Inayatullah Mashriqi exposed his weakness by tendering an apology in Lucknow to the Government and thus sounded the death-knell of Khaksar movement. Many spurious organizations were formed in the Frontier Province, but they could not meet the challenge of the Khudai Khidmatgars and fizzled out. We worked unsparingly among the people and our movement spread like wild fire. In the Kohat district alone, a hundred thousand Khudai Khidmatgars were enlisted. Through exasperation, the British wanted to arrest me. In vain, they tried to convince Gandhiji that I was guilty. On this point there was correspondence between Lord Willingdon and Gandhiji, who sent for me to meet him at Bardoli.

"On the way to Bardoli, Shoaib Quereshi, son-in-law of Mahomed Ali, met me at the Bhopal railway station and, on his insistence, I spent one night as a guest of the Nawab of Bhopal. Shaukat Ali, too, was his guest then. He told me, 'If you agree, we both can meet the Viceroy and I am quite certain that he would grant all your demands on behalf of the Pakhtuns.' Declining the offer to meet the Viceroy, I said, 'I have not that faith in the Viceroy, I am leaving for Bardoli.'

"At Bardoli I had a frank discussion with Gandhiji. I told him that the Government were falsely accusing me. They want to stop me from working among the people. 'You, please, write to the Viceroy to call all those who are complaining against me, and you both sit in judgement. If I am found guilty, I am prepared to accept your verdict.' Gandhiji conveyed my proposal to the Viceroy and suggested that he should be permitted to visit the Frontier Province to study the situation there, and if the Viceroy desired, we both would meet him in Simla, where he was spending the summer season. Gandhiji detained me in expectation of a reply from the Viceroy. When the Viceroy refused to comply with his request, Gandhiji said to me, 'I realize now that you are right, go ahead with your work.'"

In a report submitted to the Congress Working Committee, Devadas Gandhi observed:

"My recent tour of six days covered practically the whole of the Peshawar district and parts of Kohat and Bannu. The popular movement is very strong in the Peshawar district and only a little less strong in Kohat and Bannu. The extraordinary harsh measures adopted by the Government in suppressing the movement last year, account largely for the present state of popular unrest.

"Today, the whole of the Pathan province is eager for freedom like the rest of India. Large numbers of people who have enlisted as Khudai Khidmatgars, have come directly under the influence of the leaders of the movement and, particularly, of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. His personality seems to act like magic among them. The simplicity of his character and the deep sympathy he evinces for the poor and the oppressed, have created for him an abiding-place in the hearts of the people. He gives himself no rest. He moves about from place to place and mixes freely among the villagers, living exactly as they do. As a rule he uses the lorry, which is the least expensive means of transport. He does a good deal of travelling on foot as well as on horseback. The expenses of his continuous touring, therefore, come to very little. His example is infectious. No worker dare spend money on the futilities or luxuries. The strictest economy is thus observed, and whatever expense is incurred comes from the pockets of the workers themselves. Khan Saheb as well as other workers spend large portions of their personal incomes on the movement. He was good enough to accompany me practically throughout the tour.

"I came across cases of cruelty and torture in connection with collection of land revenue. The sufferings on this account seemed to me to be acute in the Charsadda and Mardan tahsils. There is no doubt that the illegal and high-handed policy pursued by the revenue authorities in some areas should cease at once, if the situation there is not to go very soon from bad to worse. I saw *purdanshin* women, who for the first time in their lives had been summoned by the revenue officials in the presence of a large number of men and subjected to indignities because they were not able to pay the land revenue due from them. I am afraid many such cases have occurred. I came across one or two myself. One *purdanshin* woman wept bitterly, as she told Khan Saheb how she had been made to stand in the hot sun, from morning to evening, with her little daughter for two or three days without being allowed even a drink of water. This seems to be a favourite form of torture applied by the revenue agents in the case of women defaulters. It is nothing short of shameful torture to make women stand or sit under the Peshawar sun in this part of the year.

"The statements of women who came with such complaints have been recorded. These incidents have caused great popular indignation and Khan Saheb himself is very much perturbed over these events. There are innumerable cases of men defaulters who have been subjected to indignities and cruelties in order to extort land revenue from them, which they are unable to pay owing to general economic distress, which the Frontier Province appears to share.

"In one case a man had been locked up in a cell which had a hornets' nest. A fire was lit under the nest and the man was left to the tender mercies of the hornets thus deliberately disturbed. He was stung all over the body, and suffered for days. Many cases of similar nature seemed to have occurred, of which a record is kept. I have seen and talked to some of the sufferers myself.

"Khudai Khidmatgars are picked out for special treatment. Other defaulters, who are either pro-Government or have agreed to have no dealings with the Khudai Khidmatgars, are not even approached for land revenue.

"I came across cases of unprovoked assault on Khudai Khidmatgars by policemen. This appears to be part of a general policy to terrorize all those who show any sympathy for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his movement. Individuals who distinguished themselves in the movement, are set upon and beaten on some pretext or the other.

"In the Peshawar district every village has its army of Khudai Khidmatgars. Their uniform is more or less of a military type. They love to wear these uniforms and to drill and march in military formation. There are many ex-servicemen amongst them. These form the training-staff. Even the ignorant villagers seem to take to drill and military parade easily. Drums and bugles are generally used during the marches. All weapons are eschewed, including lathis. Officers hold canes as emblem of supposed dignity rather than as a weapon of offence. Since fire-arms are common in the province, it would be easy for them to hold armed parades. But this was tabooed under instructions from Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. From what I could observe, the fullest emphasis is laid on non-violence. I was told that many Khudai Khidmatgars have been giving up their arms on principle and would not care to use them even for the purposes of self-defence against the dacoits. I talked with many volunteers in order to understand their idea of non-violence. They seemed to be clear about it. They had taken vows not to raise a finger even though they may be tortured to death. This was certainly observed last year when the liquor-shop pickets were tortured and indecently assaulted. The Pathan, when he has once made up his mind, seems to be capable of a lot of self-suffering without retaliation. I had prolonged conversations with Khan Saheb and the other leaders on these matters. They fully agreed with the Congress interpretation of non-violence and have assured me that it was their constant endeavour to ensure strict adherence to it.

"Nothing in the nature of constructive work on the Congress lines has yet been attempted. But there appears to be considerable scope for the production of khadi on a large scale. Spinning wheels were to be seen

in most of the villages. With the present very favourable state of public opinion in the Frontier Province, it would not be a matter for surprise if foreign cloth could be displaced by khadi to a very great extent in a comparatively short space of time. Khan Saheb is keen on making an attempt and has been pressing for the help of experts to put the work immediately under way.

"At the end of my six days' wanderings I have realized more than ever before the power and inspiration of the personality of Khan Saheb. There is under him a strong band of workers who obey him implicitly. In view of the deep affection and the reverence in which Khan Saheb is held in his province and in view of his own unambiguous statements and confidence, I feel sure that there are very great potentialities in the movement. The one central and unquestionable fact that emerges from all talks I had with the people representing various points of view was that Khan Saheb himself is held in great esteem by all, not excluding the critics of the Red Shirt movement."

Second Settlement

1931

THE Chief Commissioner of the Frontier Province, Sir Steuart Pears, had an interview with Abdul Ghaffar on July 30, 1931, for more than three hours. "I tried several times to turn him and his conversation into some constructive thoughts for the future, but without success," recorded the Chief Commissioner in an official document. "I said, 'Well, the Pathan is getting on, it looks as if he was going to get more reforms than he ever hoped for or even dreamt of, and that pretty soon!' 'Reforms? Your reforms? What is the use of them? The paper reforms. They will not make any difference. What we want is change of heart,' he remarked . . . I did not attempt to guage the strength of his religious convictions, but at a guess I should not call him a devout Muslim. One thing he suffers from very badly is an inferiority complex, as is shown by his constantly harping on the present 'state of slavery' of the Afghan race . . . I said to him more than once, 'If you want me to do the best for the Pathans of the province, you must help me to get over the present difficulties, instead of creating fresh ones.' I moved towards the door and saw him off telling him that I hoped to see him again and that I trusted that in Bombay he would do his best to prevent this province from being dragged by the other people's quarrels, whether Jawaharlal's or Vallabhbhai Patel's. As we said good-bye, I gave Abdul Ghaffar a final word of warning—I told him, I hoped, there was no need for me to impress on him the lessons of the terrorist attacks on Sir E. Hotson and Garlick, but I expected that he realized the resentment caused in England by these outrages. What was infinitely more serious, however, was that, a week or so previously, a European woman had been attacked by a Muslim of this province. I said, 'You have been referring in your speeches to European women lately. I advise you to stop it.' "

The early part of the prolonged interview was conducted in English. "His English, contrary to reports, was quite correct but abnormally slow and deliberate. At this juncture he slipped into Pakhtu and talked easily and naturally, almost to the end of interview. Only once did he get excited and go back to English and to Urdu which was poor."

About the middle of July the complaints which became known as the Congress charge-sheet, were personally handed over to Mr. Emerson, the Home Secretary, by Gandhi. On July 18 Gandhi had an interview

with the Viceroy. The correspondence between the Government and Gandhi continued. In the midst of a very delicate situation there were terrorist acts by the end of July. The first was an attempt on the life of Sir Ernest Hotson, the Acting-Governor of Bombay, and within a week, Mr. Garlick, the District Judge of Alipore, was shot dead in his court-room. "The Bhagat Singh worship has done and is doing incalculable harm to the country," said Gandhi. He, however, warned the Government against retribution and repression. "They can deal with the disease only by dealing with the cause. If they have neither the will nor the courage to do so, let them leave the rest to the nation."

The All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay for three days, beginning on August 6. It recorded a unanimous vote in favour of a resolution condemning political murders and calling upon all Congress organizations to carry on an intensive propaganda of non-violence. In moving the resolution, which was his own draft, Gandhi said:

"I am asked, if you condemn the deeds of these young men, why not then simultaneously condemn those of the Government too. Those who argue like this, do not know the Congress. The Congress is pledged to end this system of Government, and no condemnation of it will help to mend it. The existence of the Congress is a standing condemnation of the system. To recite the wrongs of the Government at the time of condemning the political murders, is to confuse the issue and to mislead the hot-blooded youth. We must tell them in the clearest possible language that they must cease to murder, no matter how great may be the provocation.

"But how, it is further asked, can you end the present system by the way of non-violence? Surely, the progress made by the country since 1920, is sufficiently tangible proof of the success. But whether we shall succeed or not is not the question. There is the Congress creed, and we have to work it out faithfully."

An important step taken by the Working Committee in Bombay was the reconstitution of the Hindustani Seva Dal, the Frontier Congress organization and the Khudai Khidmatgars, so as to make them conform to the Congress programme and creed. The following statement, embodying the decisions of the Working Committee, was issued:

"It was agreed by the Frontier leaders that the present North-West Frontier Provincial Congress Committee and the Afghan Jirga should coalesce and the new provincial organization, formed in accordance with the Congress constitution, should represent the Congress in the province. This newly elected committee will be the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. In the language of the North-West Frontier Province, it may be described as the Frontier Province Jirga. Similarly, the district

and the local Congress committees may be described as local jirgas, the fact that they are Congress committees being also clearly stated. The Khudai Khidmatgars, it was agreed, should become Congress volunteer organization in accordance with the Working Committee's recent resolution. The name Khudai Khidmatgars may, however, be retained. The whole organization should be conducted in accordance with the constitution, rules and programme of the Congress. The flag to be used henceforth will, of course, be the national flag.

"At the request of the Working Committee the Frontier leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, has undertaken to shoulder the burden of leading the Congress movement in the province."

Before leaving for Peshawar on August 9th, Abdul Ghaffar said to Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's secretary: "I am anxious to tell you one or two things. The position is quite intolerable in our province for several reasons. You talk of a revenue situation in your parts. Well, it is much more intolerable in our parts. The revenue authorities in your part take the help of the police, those in our part assume the functions themselves. We have tolerated all the repression and will tolerate it, but when they make our women the target of it, it becomes difficult. It is not that they want to molest our women, but they want to provoke us to violence. Well, we will not play into their hands. Then I shall not worry you with all that the Khudai Khidmatgars are being treated to. On the very day Devadas left Peshawar, ten workers whom I had sent to Campbellpur were heavily belaboured and left helpless on the Attock border."

In his letter to the Viceroy, dated August 14, 1931, Gandhi wrote: "Events have moved so fast that I have not had the time to acknowledge your very kind personal letter of 31st July . . . The Working Committee has no desire to embarrass the Government at the present juncture and therefore, it is prepared to continue honourably to work the settlement. But such working must depend upon a reciprocal attitude on the part of the provincial governments. As I have told you so often through correspondence and our conversations, this reciprocity has been found to be progressively missing. Information continues to be received at the office of the Working Committee of Government activity, which can only be interpreted to be token of a design to crush the Congress workers and the normal Congress activities. If, therefore, the settlement is to abide, I venture to think that an early relief in the matter of complaints already filed is necessary. More, as I have already said, are coming and the co-workers are insistent that if relief is not had in time, they should at least get the permission to adopt defensive measures."

The Congress charge-sheet with regard to the Frontier Province said: "The tahsildars of the Malakand Agency told certain people who were

undergoing confinement in the Malakand Agency lock-up that they would be released if they would consent to shoot Khudai Khidmatgars. They were further told that they could obtain their release if they catch hold of as many Khudai Khidmatgars as possible and release them after exacting a couple of hundred rupees from each of them. A Khudai Khidmatgar in Sadum was stabbed and another in Rustam was assassinated on the night of July 4, 1931, under suspicious circumstances.

"At Daulatpur in Charsadda, Abdullajan Zaildar of Batgram, assisted by the Frontier Constabulary, collected all the volunteers who had not paid up their revenue dues, and shut up six of them in a room full of hornets and set the hornets on them by making smoke in the room. When they were let out with their faces awfully swollen owing to the hornets' stings, they were told to go and tell their wives to pay up their revenues.

"On June 27, 1931 Abdullajan and his party caught hold of such Khudai Khidmatgars as had been unable to pay up the land revenue and made them sit in the hot sun with their hands tied together behind their back. Anyone who uttered even a word was beaten with the butt-ends of rifles, as a result of which one old man collapsed . . .

"At Shabqadar, Almar and Hamid Khan, both holders of *jagirs* from the Government, caught hold of two Khudai Khidmatgars and took them before a political officer and ordered them to give up Congress work. On their refusal to do so, they were stripped naked and severely beaten. One of them was made to lie on the ground in the hot sun, secured in that position by tight strings, and fingers and pieces of wood were thrust into his rectum to humiliate him, this sort of insult being regarded by Pathans as only short of death . . .

"Copies of the May issue of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Pakhtu magazine, *Pakhtun*, which is purely devoted to the cause of social reform, have been held up by the postal authorities and no reason for it has been given to Khan Saheb.

"All meetings and processions have been prohibited in Khalil, in Mohmand, and in the tahsil of Peshawar."

On his return to Peshawar, addressing a meeting of the Congress workers and Khudai Khidmatgars, Abdul Ghaffar said on August 13 that their innocent brethren had been cruelly beaten in the Akbarpura village. He was greatly touched by this incident, and here he broke down. Proceeding he stated that he had asked Mahatma Gandhi that he should be allowed to act according to his own wishes, but then the Mahatma did not permit him to do so, otherwise he would have shown to the Government that it had to deal with the Pathans and not others. The perfidious Government was breaking the terms of the truce, at

every step, oppressing the people. The Britishers were taking revenge on them. The Government should know that the people had nothing with them, now-a-days, to pay the revenue dues. The Britishers were leading luxurious lives, while the people were dying of hunger. The Government should realize that it would be compelled to retreat to London by the Pathans. Tyrant kings like Pharaohs had met their ends in disaster. God never helped a tyrant. The people had coloured their clothes with their blood and were determined to stand against all odds and drive away the Britishers."

Gandhi's request that some form of arbitration tribunal should be set up to decide points at issue between the Government and the Congress, arising out of the settlement, was refused by the Government. He had been much concerned with the developments in the United Provinces, the Frontier Province and Gujarat, which he considered amounted to a breach of the settlement on the part of local governments concerned. In the second week of August he telegraphed to the Viceroy that the situation made his departure for London impossible.

The Viceroy wrote to Gandhi: "The activities of Congress, during the last five months, have, in many directions, been quite contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the Delhi settlement and have involved a constant menace not only to the continuance of the settlement but the maintenance of peace, particularly, in the United Provinces and North-West Frontier Province." He further reminded Gandhi that the refusal of the Congress to be represented at the Round Table Conference in London "involves the failures of the main objects which the settlement was intended to secure".

Gandhi accompanied by Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Abdul Ghaffar reached Simla on August 25, for an interview with the Viceroy. Following the discussion between the Viceroy and Gandhi a communique was published on August 28. This communique, sometimes known as the "second settlement", provided that the Congress should be represented at the Round Table Conference in London by Gandhi; that the settlement of 5th March would remain operative; that the Congress complaint regarding the repressive action in Bardoli would be made the subject of an inquiry; that no inquiry would be held into any other complaint made by the Congress; and that future complaints would be dealt with in accordance with ordinary administrative procedure and practice.

"If the provincial governments are as innocent as they claim to be," observed Gandhi, "why should they shirk an impartial investigation? But according to second settlement they refuse to face an inquiry. The Congress has submitted to the refusal. But it has also made it clear,

that submission to the refusal need not mean submission to the injustice involved, and if there is a wrong to which, in the opinion of the Congress, it would be against the interest of the nation to submit, the Congress has reserved the right, in spite of the settlement which contemplates the suspension of civil disobedience, to take it up as a measure of self-defence. It is the only alternative to an inquiry when discussion and negotiation and petition fail. Let me hope, however, that even defensive civil disobedience will be found unnecessary. So far as it is humanly possible, pending the result of London visit, civil disobedience should be avoided. But it cannot be and must not be avoided at the cost of national self-respect or well-being."

During his sojourn in Simla, Abdul Ghaffar received a letter from Mr. Howell, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, requesting him to meet him. He promptly expressed his inability to see him. Mr. Howell reported about it to Gandhi who asked Abdul Ghaffar to explain his stand. "I am a weak human being and I do not want to slip walking on a slippery ground," he answered. Gandhi roared with laughter, saying, "Don't I meet the Firangis?" "You are a Mahatma," he remarked, but to please Gandhi he met Mr. Howell on August 29. About the interview Abdul Ghaffar says:

"Mr. Howell was a good man and had served in the N.-W. Frontier Province. His deputy, Mr. Wylie, too had served in our province and we were acquainted with each other. Howell remarked that the British had excellent relations with the Pakhtuns, but due to fiery speeches the relations were spoilt. 'Fiery speeches do not mar the relations,' I said, 'ask Mr. Wylie how you British have misbehaved with the Pathans.' 'Why are you silent?', I asked Wylie. 'You know everything, you were then the Deputy-Commissioner of Peshawar District. You compelled us to join the Congress.' A telephone call interrupted our talk. Howell told me that it was a message from Mr. Emerson, the Home Secretary, wishing to meet me. As he had made no appointment with me, I said, 'I cannot meet Mr. Emerson.' The Home Secretary entreated me to meet him for a short while, and Howell added that Emerson's office was on my way back to the residence. After my talk with Howell, I went to Emerson's office."

Mr. Howell recorded in his file the gist of their talk thus:

"He laid all the blame on the Government, and we laid it all on him. We then told him that charges and countercharges would not advance matters much. Government had already decided to give the people of the province most of the things which he said they wanted. With the help of the Government he could do a great deal, without it very little. Government had shown great forbearance. Could he not

show some, at any rate, while the Round Table Conference was sitting? He went off two or three times on his old tack about the inequities of the government servants and the cruelties to which his Red Shirts were being subjected. In reply to this he was told, first, that the courts which were impartial, were open for the prosecution of any case in which cruelty or improper conduct could be proved and, secondly, that if the Government looked unfavourably on the Red Shirts, it was mainly the Khan's fault. He had done his best to make his followers hate and despise Government and its officers. Was it not natural that these feelings should be to some extent reciprocated? In the end the Khan was urged to meet the Chief Commissioner and see whether he was not prepared to meet him at least half way."

About his talk with Mr. Emerson, Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"As I was stepping in, Emerson pompously remarked, 'You in your speech at Meerut said that the British have white faces but black hearts. If I publish a report of this speech in England, surely, the British would withhold the reforms which they have promised to grant.'

"I replied that I had said much more in that meeting and I give you my permission to publish the full report of that speech in British newspapers. I had made it clear in my speech that we had good relations with the British and were greatly enamoured of them. Whatever best eatables we had, we offered to the British, depriving our own children of them. And yet we failed to please them. Even the reforms which India was not prepared to accept, were denied to us. That is why we were convinced that the British have white faces but dirty minds.

"Howell's manners were not discourteous like that of Emerson, who had spent the major part of his career in the Punjab."

Emerson recorded the gist of his talk with Abdul Ghaffar thus:

"He explained to me at length the origin of his movement, giving as its objects: (1) the consolidation of the Afghans; (2) social reform; (3) the preservation of the Frontier Province for Afghans if there was a revolution in India, which threatened the security of the province.

"I have not noticed the third object previously mentioned. It is a commentary on the so-called non-violent nature of the movement. He said that it had in its origin no anti-British motive, but that the events of 1930 had definitely given it an anti-government side, although he and his followers were still prepared to be friends. He said, up to April 1930, he had about 1,000 volunteers at the most, but claimed now to have 200,000. I ridiculed the latter figure.

"He further claimed that the truce had been observed on his side. This I would not admit . . . He also dwelt on the non-violent nature of his movement and stoutly denied that the Red Shirts had ever been

guilty of violence. I gave him instances on the contrary, but as usual, he took the line that reports given to the Government of India were not true. He has altogether an absurd idea of his power of control over his followers. I talked to him about the Sarband incident, about the attempts to hold up motor-cars with the British officers in them, about provocative parades of Red Shirts in the presence of troops, about the incident at Mardan when they set up a quarter-guard just outside one of the regimental guards, and generally about the practice of bands of Red Shirts, calling objectionable slogans in front of police stations. I told him that I could not reconcile these incidents with the principle of non-violence. I told him also that Government could place no reliance on his movement being non-violent, and that experience everywhere had proved that non-violence very quickly degenerated into violence.

"His general line was that while he had observed the settlement, the local administration had broken it, and that there was practically a system of martial law in the province. He constantly stated that there was a policy of revenge in operation against the Red Shirts and gave several instances of discrimination against them in the collection of the land revenue. I tackled him with the part that Red Shirts had played in discouraging the payment of land revenue. He denied this and said that he had paid his own revenue and would certainly not have done so, had he been prepared to advise other people not to do so.

". . . I told him that many of his speeches gave ample material for prosecution and that Government had shown the utmost forbearance in not prosecuting him. The reason was that the Government did not want to take action, if it could be avoided, that would definitely lead to a break in settlement, that it was not through fear that Government had abstained, and if it came to a fight, the Government would have no difficulty in dealing with his movement. He said that he was pained that he himself should be left free from prosecution while his followers were being prosecuted. He himself was anxious for peace, but he could not keep silence while wrongs were being done to Red Shirts, without any provocation on their side. I advised him to maintain seven days' silence in the week . . . I told him that if he wanted a fight he could have a good one and that he must disabuse himself of any idea that the inaction of Government was due to fear. Whenever I mentioned events in any other province, either by way of illustration or comparison, he at once interrupted; said he was not interested and was concerned with the Frontier only. This was very marked, and sooner or later, he will certainly split with the Congress.

"He was quite friendly and he has a sense of humour. He seemed to me to be a fanatic and able to see only one side of the picture, who

thoroughly believes that the administration and its officers are all up against him, and no cause has been given to them for the action they have had to take. He will, I fancy, attempt to follow Gandhi's instructions to go slow, but he is unlikely to succeed because of his inability to restrain himself when any incident occurs, which he can interpret as repression against his Red Shirts. I think that he will try to stop provocative and irritating activities, such as, demonstrations before police stations, insults to the British officers, etc. At the same time, I should be very much surprised, if he does not work hard at the consolidation of those already recruited, and this part of his activities will want very careful watching."

Speaking at a public meeting in Simla, Abdul Ghaffar observed that he belonged to an unfortunate province, where trouble was experienced daily from the hands of the Government. Referring to the charge-sheet given to Gandhi by Government, he said that people in glass-houses should not throw stones, and remarked that he could not help laughing at it. The Government's attitude was that of a lawyer, who knowing that the accused was guilty, defends him. Referring to the incident in Akbarpura, he said that the treatment meted out to the villagers by the military, could not be expected of the most savage of governments. That, on this occasion, when women and children went to fetch water for their wounded, their pitchers were broken at the instigation of the British officers. The people were, on one hand, beaten, on the other, they had been arrested. This was an example of British civilization, and he challenged the Government to deny this charge.

In a letter to Mr. Emerson, Gandhi wrote: "I had no time to take a statement from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan about Akbarpura and the treatment of the prisoners whom, for want of a better distinguishing term, I describe as political. The Khan Saheb gave me a harrowing description of the prisoners in the Peshawar jail who were convicted in connection with a drama about which, you would remember, we had a discussion. Khan Saheb tells me that the prisoners are kept in irons and given the heavy work of turning *kharas*. I do not mind heavy work being given to able-bodied men, but the ablest bodied men have also limits to their capacity for exertion and it is no joke to work on the *kharas* with irons on one's legs. I enclose herewith a statement made by Shrimati Khurshedbehn regarding what she saw of the injured men and women in Akbarpura. I would like you not to brush aside all these statements as false or exaggerated . . ."

Firoz Khan Noon who met Abdul Ghaffar at a dinner party given by a student in Simla, remarked, "Oh, you Pakhtuns have harmed the Muslims greatly." "How are we at fault?" Abdul Ghaffar questioned.

"We approached you first, but you were disinclined to help us. We then went to the Congress. We are fed up with slavery, we want freedom. If you too aspire for freedom, we are with you." "We shall consult our colleagues and let you know," said Sir Firoz and met him after fifteen years in Patna during the Bihar riots.

A correspondent of *The Civil and Military Gazette* created much misunderstanding about Abdul Ghaffar's interview with the British officials in Simla. He published a distorted report that the Congress Working Committee did not accept Abdul Ghaffar's views about the inquiry in the Frontier incidents and that he was about to leave the Congress. It created a great sensation in the Punjab and the Frontier. When Abdul Ghaffar reached Lahore, Nawab Sahibzada Sir Abdulqayyum sent a messenger from the Frontier to convey to him the message that in no case he should leave the Congress, because, if he did, the British would not grant any reforms to the Frontier Province.

On his return from Simla, Abdul Ghaffar found that the British had generated fear and resentment in the minds of some of his colleagues who were secretly working against him. Some friends thought that the rift was harmful to the movement and they arranged a meeting at the residence of Mian Jafar Shah to iron out the differences. His adversaries said that they had no faith in the Hindus and feared that they might be cheated of their rights at the Round Table Conference and wanted to pass a resolution to that effect. Abdul Ghaffar told them that, so far, the Hindus had not betrayed them, and no trouble should be created at this juncture. "If they betray us," he solemnly declared, "we, Khudai Khidmatgars, shall follow your lead." Continuing the narration Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"At night, finally, when the differences were ironed out, we parted as friends. In the morning, when we were having our tea, Mian Ahmed Shah, General Secretary of the Provincial Jirga, raised the objection to the practice of all people following the lead of one man and carrying out his commands. I told him, 'Mian Saheb, to follow the lead of one man is beneficial to any country, and this is accepted all over the world. Of course, it will depend upon whether that man is working for the country or for himself. If he works for his own interests, it is harmful for the country and he must be opposed. If you think that I am working for personal gain then you should oppose me, but if I am working for the nation then you should support me.' They were bent upon creating dissension and Mian Ahmed Shah and Khan Abdul Akbar Khan, who was our president, not only parted with us, but worked against us."

Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmed Shah issued a long statement in the form of a tract, in September 1931, complaining against Abdul

Ghaffar's merging the Youth League and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Indian National Congress:

"On 9th August 1931 Abdul Ghaffar Khan made an agreement with the Congress at Bombay that the Frontier Afghan Jirga would become the Frontier Congress Committee, that the Khudai Khidmatgars would become the Congress volunteers, and that the black flag of the Afghans would be replaced by the Congress flag. Of course, this much authority has been given to the Frontier leaders by the Congress Working Committee that, to save themselves from the criticism of the people, they can retain the names of the jirga and the Khudai Khidmatgars. But, in fact, the jirga will not be the old jirga and the Khudai Khidmatgars will not be Khudai Khidmatgars. We tried our utmost that our institution may not lose its entity—because everybody looks graceful in his own party—but nobody listened to us. The people who were present in the meeting of the Afghan Central Jirga on August 23, accepted the agreement . . . We thought we should discuss the matter once again with him. Abdul Ghaffar returned on the 12th September, and we, accompanied by a few friends, went to him to discuss the matter. Many proposals were put up, but none was accepted. In the end it was settled that we should make a statement.

"The nation should know that we have neither tendered our resignations, nor have we stopped our work. We have no personal enmity with Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and he is even now one of our dear friends. We have respect for him. We may say that we should co-operate with the Congress like the Jamiat-ul-Ulema or Sikh League, but we should not lose our identity. The Bombay agreement only leaves bones to us and takes away the marrow. We say that we will not refuse to serve the nation if it needs our services and wishes to retain its old jirga . . ."

In reply, on September 21 Abdul Ghaffar stated the facts thus:

"Many attacks have been made in the newspapers upon my person and many objections are raised against me, but I do not consider it necessary, to give a reply as long as I do not apprehend any harm to the nation. I would not have contradicted this statement, but I know that it will cause some misunderstanding in the nation and my silence would eventually amount to a guilt.

"In their statement, my brethren have written many things, here and there, to mislead the public, but their real objection is, 'why did I amalgamate the Youth League with the Congress without the previous sanction of the Frontier Loe Jirga?' The facts are as follows:

"Our Youth League was formed in 1929. At that time we had stated its aims as the construction of the house of the Pathan nation and the removal of serious defects from it. It was only for this purpose that

we formed jirgas and enlisted the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier Province. In April 1930 we were arrested. After this the Government began to practise untold excesses upon our workers and the Khudai Khidmatgars. When the members of the Working Committee of our jirga were convinced that the Government wanted to ruin the Pathans, they, in order to save themselves, sought moral help from the various institutions of India, but none was prepared to render it excepting the Congress. The Congress began to sympathize with our Pathan nation, as far as it could, that is, it exposed the oppression on us to the world through newspapers and speeches. It appointed a committee to inquire into the incident of April 1930 and it showed sympathy in many other ways. For these reasons Mian Abdullah Shah and Mian Jafar Shah, the two responsible members of our jirga, published a pamphlet in English containing facts with the consent of Abdul Akbar Khan, Mian Ahmed Shah and myself. They have announced, 'Our Youth League is a part of the Congress.' The Afghan Central Jirga also made a statement in support of this. After this the Government made many efforts by different ways that our jirga should sever its connection with the Congress. Even in jail we were informed that if we severed our connection with the Congress, a separate peace would be made with us. But when Mian Ahmed Shah, Abdul Akbar Khan and I thought over the question, we arrived at the conclusion that the Government would ruin us in case the jirga severed its connection with the Congress. We, therefore, did not accept the proposal.

"After the truce we came out of jail. Mian Ahmed Shah might well remember that, on his insistence, I admitted the jirga to be a part of the Congress in the course of a contradiction I had published in reply to false propaganda of *The Civil and Military Gazette*. Rather the Mian Saheb had himself stated emphatically, 'We should join the Congress, otherwise the Government would ruin our jirga.' He knows quite well what can be the meaning of admitting the jirga to be a part of the Congress, on the one hand, and, on the other, making a statement that we simply had an alliance and connection with the Congress!

"Later on the members of the Peshawar Congress Committee began to raise objections. We had a discussion with them. Khan Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmed Shah were prepared to accept that the jirgas of the Peshawaris should be called Congress committees and that of the villagers should retain their old name of the jirga and that their headquarters should be at Utmanzai. But the Peshawaris did not accept the proposal. The dispute was prolonged and both the parties had to go to Bombay. Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmed Shah entreated me to get rid of the Peshawaris, and further requested me to try my best with

the Congress to let the name of the jirga remain as it is. At last we went to Bombay. Mian Ahmed Shah returned from Bombay, as he thought Devadas had not shown sufficient respect to him. What a weakness it is on the part of Mian Ahmed Shah to become angry at such an ordinary matter when he had gone for such an important question! If the Mian Saheb has so much sympathy for the nation, as he has expressed in his statement, why did he not then give preference to the national cause over a personal matter so that everything would have been settled in his presence? When Mian Saheb came back, I was forced to make whatever agreement I considered advantageous to the nation. I would have nullified my agreement even afterwards, had it not been unanimously accepted by the Provincial Central Committee, which, according to the rules and regulations, is the only Loe Jirga. How much harm can be done by the Mian Saheb's secret propaganda and his whispering into the ears of each individual member that the agreement is wrong! Then what a great a national crime it is to publish such an improper statement! My brethren, whatever has been done is in accordance with the rules and regulations. The Mian Saheb called the members of the jirga from the whole province and they unanimously ratified my agreement. This is the Loe Jirga. There is no mention in the rules and regulations of any other Loe Jirga, to which the Mian Saheb refers. Of course, it is written there that a Loe Jirga will be held annually, but it means the annual meeting.

"Besides this, it is wrong to say that our connection with the Congress would be like that of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind or Sikh League, because these have never said that they were a part of the Congress, whereas our jirga had already announced that it was a part of the Congress.

"Now about the flag. I say that our jirga had not fixed any flag for itself up to that time. Everywhere the flags were irregular. Every party gave to its flag the colour it liked. Many of them had the Congress flag. Hence, where is the harm if the Provincial Jirga has selected the Congress flag? It is quite wrong to say that the jirga had chosen the black flag. It is also quite wrong to say that the jirga would disappear in the Congress like sugar in water, as Mian Saheb thinks.

"In my humble opinion, it is not a new settlement. It has already been admitted that the aims, principles, policies and the opponents of the jirga and the Congress are one and the same. The only difference is that our party was called jirga and our volunteers were called Khudai Khidmatgars and their uniforms were red. Even after this agreement, these things will continue as before. I do not know what is the underlying object of Mian Ahmed Shah and Khan Abdul Akbar Khan. I think that they are finding some excuse to leave the work, because they

had tendered resignations almost in every meeting of the jirga but they were not accepted. If this is the object, what is then the need of causing disunion in the nation? Willingly and peacefully they should leave the work and should not disturb others engaged in national service.

"In conclusion, I humbly say that I have spent the best part of my life, about twenty-one years, in serving the Pathan nation. I considered *haram* for myself all rest and comfort and all the benefits of health and wealth. I have served the Pathan nation not caring whether it was night or day, whether it was hot or cold, whether it was raining, or whether I was ill. I did not mind any hardships of the jail life. All this I did only that the Pathan nation may become prosperous and honourably stand on a level with the other nations of the world. It is quite impossible that I sell to other people the honour and distinction which the Pathans have achieved in the world as the result of their sacrifices.

"If you have trust in my sincerity, believe me that, at present, it is good and advantageous for us to join the Congress. As a result of our unity and organization that we are now commanding universal respect. We would become disgraced if we split into parties; the whole world will laugh at us, the fruit of my twenty-one years' national service and the sacrifices of the Pathans will go in vain.

"Let me assure you that I would be the first to sever my connection with the Congress if our union with it was, in any way, going to prove disadvantageous to the Pathans or to the faith, and I would be the first person to declare a peaceful war against the whole world for safeguarding the interests of the Pathans. The Congress is, in accordance with its past pledges, bound to render us every help. If the Congress breaks its pledge, we reserve the right to withdraw. Nobody has tied our hands.

"Brethren, you should decide for yourselves whether harm can come to us by joining the Congress. We have, on the other hand, been strengthened by our union with the Congress, a strong companion."

Breach Of Truce

1931

FOLLOWING Gandhi's departure on August 29, 1931, a brief period of calm ensued and the centre of political interest shifted to London. The financial crisis of the second half of September compelled the British Government to announce their decision to abandon the gold standard and to link the rupee to the sterling. The financial programme of the Government of India included heavy and varied taxation. The peasants found it difficult to pay their revenue dues and the Government acted harshly, particularly, in the Frontier Province. A well-known case of Mazulla Khan, a leading landlord and Khudai Khidmatgar, is worth quoting. He was locked up as a defaulter. He wrote to the authorities saying that he had no intention to withhold payment and that he would try to pay up as soon as possible. For a couple of thousand rupees due from him, a motor-car, a tonga, a horse and three buffaloes belonging to him were attached. After his release his crops too were attached and finally his land worth over a hundred and fifty thousand rupees was attached. Another instance is of Obeidulla Khan, Dr. Khan Sahib's second son, who had to pay a very large amount as revenue for the lands standing in his name. He had paid the bulk of it, and only Rs. 300 was in arrears. He was arrested for this default and put in a lock-up in Charsadda, which was so indescribably filthy that he thought it fit to refuse all food rather than put up with these conditions. The term of his imprisonment was a month and a half. He had to go on hunger-strike for thirty-eight days before the conditions were improved; within a couple of days thereafter he was released. He went through his convalescence under his father's care for a month and then went to his village where he was arrested under the ordinance.

The lull in the political activities in the early days of September was soon broken by propaganda tours of Abdul Ghaffar, who was authorized by the Working Committee to reorganize the Congress work in the Frontier Province. Towards the close of the month, picketing increased markedly. In Peshawar city as many as 3,000 Red Shirts were employed, of whom some 300 were on duty at one time. Picket reliefs marched through the city in formation of about fifty, and this display of organization impressed and enthused the people. In October numerous meetings were held and processions organized and Abdul Ghaffar undertook flying tours to make the people conscious of their rights and

duties. In certain places the Government prohibited public meetings. Abdul Ghaffar defied the orders or evaded them by holding meetings in mosques. He exhorted the people to prepare for the coming struggle. At the conclusion of many of his meetings the Red Shirts marched in column with their banners flying and drums beating. During his tours he was received in many villages by gathering of the Red Shirts lining the road. "Hear me patiently," he said at the meetings, "perhaps I will be arrested soon. We want freedom of speech and pen as it exists in the rest of the world. We want equal rights with the rest of India. We demand the repeal of all black laws. If we develop strength, we will get everything."

At the end of October a Working Committee meeting was held in Delhi, to which Abdul Ghaffar was specially invited to participate. The Working Committee discussed the serious situation in the country and condemned the government policy of terrorization in Bengal, in U.P. and the Frontier Province.

After the meeting Jawaharlal Nehru took Abdul Ghaffar aside and said: "We are sending Rs. 500 per month to the Peshawar Congress Committee for their expenses. From now on we shall allot to your jirga Rs. 1,000 per month."

"Panditji, we don't need your money," said Abdul Ghaffar. "Why should we take money from you? Is India only your country? She is a common motherland to us both. You carry your load, we shall bear ours. If you want to help us then build a girls' school and a hospital for our women."

Jawaharlal got angry and said nothing more to him but complained to Dr. Ansari that Abdul Ghaffar was proud and haughty. "I have said nothing offensive to him," Abdul Ghaffar explained to Dr. Ansari. "A Khudai Khidmatgar and arrogance never go together."

He observes: "Till then Jawaharlalji and I did not know each other well, we were not close friends and did not know the temperament of each other. When we became intimate, our mutual affection and love grew so deep as is not to be found among blood brothers. This reference to money was loathsome to me. I have never in my life asked for money from anybody. The Working Committee members accepted the rail fare from the Congress organization, but I never did. Jawaharlal had hot arguments with me over this."

On November 1, Abdul Ghaffar arrived at Rustam. He was joined in the Rustam bazar by a number of Khudai Khidmatgar leaders with whom he went round the Rustam bazar speaking to pickets. He then met some Hindu merchants to ascertain their attitude to the pickets. A police officer warned him not to collect people as Rustam was covered

by section 144 of Criminal Procedure Code. Abdul Ghaffar then held a meeting in the Rustam mosque and the sub-inspector served him with a notice, warning him to observe the prohibitory order. A large number of people of the neighbouring area attended the meeting. A summary of the speech, as reported by the police, is as follows:

"Do not fear death. Section 144 is your test. If you cannot oppose this order, how will you come out to the battlefield? Pay no attention to the order. Be ready and come out to the non-violent battlefield. Non-violent war means a kind of war your ancestors fought 1,400 years ago. Show the people that you are their descendants. The Chief Commissioner has come 6,000 miles to rule you. He drives about in a motor-car, cuts out your flesh and draws a monthly salary of Rs. 5,000. Rule yourselves, and as long as you live, do not submit to the rule of anybody else. Be prepared and free yourselves from the *zalim hakumat*. If you perish on the battlefield, what does it matter? Everyone must die. It is your duty to gain freedom from this *zalim hakumat* for the sake of your descendants. If you have not done your part, how will you answer to God and the Prophet on the Day of Judgement?"

Throughout the truce period, the police recorded all the speeches and writings of Abdul Ghaffar. He was shadowed everywhere and his activities were closely followed. The police records of his tours and his writings in *Pakhtun*, form a unique historical document. It was a period of his intense political activity, equalled only by Gandhi, Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel. A fortnightly report, marked secret, of the Frontier Province Government for the first half of November 1931, said:

"The fortnight has been one of considerable activity on the part of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In his tour made in the area of the Mardan subdivision of the Peshawar district, in which a prohibitory order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, forbidding meetings, demonstrations and processions, other than those for the religious purposes, had recently been enforced, he made several more than usually virulent speeches, one of them, which was delivered at a meeting at Rustam, was for all practical purposes a defiance of the prohibitory order, since although nominally held in a mosque, the audience which was a large one, spread well beyond the confines of it. In this speech, which was an undisguisedly political one, Abdul Ghaffar Khan openly incited his audience to defy the prohibitory order and exhorted the members of it to regard themselves as subjected to a test by the passing of it. So far there has been no response to Abdul Ghaffar Khan's incitement and there have been no further meetings within the prohibited area since his departure, and it is possible that the local Red Shirt leaders are not prepared to follow Abdul Ghaffar Khan's lead to this length

or they regard the incitement as due merely to the fit of ill temper from which Abdul Ghaffar Khan was clearly suffering at the time. On the other hand, there are indications that the Red Shirts in the Mardan subdivision are now waiting to see what action, if any, will be taken against Abdul Ghaffar Khan for an act which is generally recognized as a virtual defiance of the prohibitory order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and for his incitement to the audience to defy that order. In the absence of such action, some deterioration in the local situation will be inevitable, with, possibly, reactions elsewhere; and in any case much of the good effect of the prohibitory order will be lost in an area which has for some time past been one of the worst in the Peshawar district and is now saturated with disloyalty and even hostility to Government.

"On his return from Mardan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan attended a large meeting at Takhtabad, which is within the limits of the Daudzai Police Thana in the Peshawar tahsil, an area which has for some time past been a cause for anxiety. As a result of this meeting, in which Abdul Ghaffar Khan indulged in one of his more objectionable tirades against the *Firangi*, the attitude towards the Government has considerably deteriorated in this tract, and one of the immediate effect has been that a large number of defaulters who had previously promised to pay up, have now refused to do so. Even among the Khans themselves there are a number who are withholding payment in the belief that the Red Shirt campaign may force the hand of Government to grant further remission of revenue or, at all events, to write off arrears. Some of the refusals to pay revenue have been made in such a manner as to suggest deliberate adoption of this form of civil disobedience . . . Propaganda is being organized in villages against the use of canal water for which water tax is paid; parties have been sent out to tour the country-side, and in Charsadda, Mardan and even in the Sam Ranizai tract of the Malakand Agency thumb-impressions have been taken from the cultivators as a pledge that they will not take canal water for the rabi crop until the rates are reduced.

"In Peshawar city, although picketing continues, the situation is now quiet and under control . . .

"On the 5th of November Abdul Ghaffar Khan left for his tour in the Hazara district. The reports received so far indicate that he has there, perhaps, for the first time, achieved a definite failure. Throughout the Mansehra subdivision, in which he opened his tour, he has encountered a considerable amount of organized opposition. In Baffa, the local stronghold of the Red Shirt organization, his reception was poor. His speech which was partly in Pakhtu and partly in Urdu, was

understood with difficulty and a considerable portion of the audience began to melt away before the conclusion of it . . . Mansehra was treated to the spectacle of two rival parades and meetings. The result of this opposition has been that the meetings arranged at some places had to be abandoned at the last moment, while, partly owing to this and partly to the lack of an efficient local organization, Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been unable to adhere to any fixed programme of meetings.

"The second battalion of the Welsh Regiment made a successful flag march from Abbottabad to Mansehra, Oghi and Baffa, from the 1st to the 6th November. Many pensioners came in and were entertained by the battalion, and at Oghi there was a certain number of the tribal people present. It is now some forty years since a British battalion has visited Oghi, and one has never been, it appears, before to Baffa.

"Very little headway has been made by Mian Ahmed Shah and his party with their 'separatist' movement. The most that can be said is that they are holding their ground. On the other hand, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's own path is far from smooth, and it is probably an increasing realization of this fact as well as the enforcement of the law against some of his principal lieutenants that explains the ill temper and lack of restraint that he has been showing lately. In addition to the opposition with which he is now faced from Mian Ahmed Shah, etc., on the one side, and the city Congress leaders, on the other, the pressure that is being brought to bear on him from above to adopt his organization more rigidly to Congress rules and regulations will probably lead to further dissensions among his followers."

Addressing a meeting of the Khudai Khidmatgars at the village of Jatho in mid-November, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"The object of coming to your village is to ask your people who are asleep, negligent and unaware of the world, to wake up. Look at your condition: old rags and naked children. Your plight is such because you are ignorant about your own religion. These youths who have worn red clothes and have come from different places, want to serve you, the creatures of God. And to serve the creatures of God is to serve God. The Prophet has said that the most pious and God-fearing youth is he who brings comfort to the creatures of God.

"Remember this also that the Musalmans alone are not the creatures of God. The Hindus, Sikhs, Musalmans, Jews, Christians and Parsis, in short, all the creatures that live in this world, are the creatures of God. The mission of Khudai Khidmatgars is to give comfort to all creatures of God. They are given training and take an oath to this effect. Their object is to rescue the oppressed from the tyrant. They would stand against a tyrant, whether he is a Hindu, a Muslim or an Englishman.

If today they are against Englishmen, it is because they are the tyrants and we are the oppressed.

"The Khudai Khidmatgars exercise patience. If somebody abuses them, they do not abuse him in return. They do not give trouble to anybody. They do not retaliate or take revenge. Our trust is in God, and He will take our revenge.

"Brethren, every one has to die but once, whether one is cowardly or brave. The death courted for the sake of God and the Prophet is praiseworthy.

"Now you would say that I tell you all these things but I have not yet told you how to turn out an Englishman, who is oppressing us all. I am going to give you such a weapon that the police and the army will not be able to stand against it. It is the weapon of the Prophet, but you are not aware of it. That weapon is patience and righteousness. No power on earth can stand against it.

"God has shown this path to the Musalmans. Infidels used to make the Musalmans lie down in fire and drag them with ropes around their necks in streets. They oppressed them in various other ways. But the Musalmans exercised patience and the tyrants were defeated.

"When you go back to your villages and visit your *hujras*, tell your brethren that there is an army of God and its weapon is patience. Ask your brethren to join the army of God. If you joined it, the servant of *Firangis* will try to frighten you but you should not be afraid of him. He has ruined Islam. We are establishing our brotherhood.

"God puts us to a test. Endure all hardships. If you exercise patience, victory will be yours. Satan's party cannot win against God's party."

In the November issue of *Pakhtun*, on "responsibility of the Government and disturbances in the country" Abdul Ghaffar wrote:

"When I hear and see the cases of robbery, dacoity and murder are increasing, day by day, and the people are looted and wounded with knives on the highway outside the Peshawar city wall, I arrive at the conclusion that there is certainly the hand of Government in it. Strange thoughts come to my mind by such events, because the losses due to the dacoities are caused mainly to our Khudai Khidmatgars, the servants of the nation. At different places their houses are being looted, their offices raided, and the thieves deprive them even of the corn if they take it to a flour-mill. We would have tolerated all this, but now the murdering of the Khudai Khidmatgars has started in many places.

"I say to the Government: 'You are most active in realizing land revenue and taxes, and you know well the method of establishing government machinery, but do you know that the subjects too have some rights! Day and night you are thinking how to fill your treasuries and

hold fast this country in your clutches. I say that you should establish peace in the country so that your subjects may live in security. If you cannot deal with a few outlaws, it would be better for you to leave the country. We can show you how peace can be maintained. The time is gone when we Pathans were ignorant and did not know our rights. We know now the duties of the Government and of the subjects. What for have you kept such large army, police force and constabulary? Is it for maintaining an unjust government to crush our legitimate rights, or is it for the destruction of the poor tribes of Afridis, Mohmands, Mahsuds and Wazirs and to occupy their territories? And if it is not so and you claim that this money is realized from the people for the protection of the subjects and establishment of peace in the country, then give us a concrete proof of it and protect our lives and property in return for the land revenue and taxes you realize. You should know this that if our hard-earned money is to be used for our own destruction and the well-being of the Englishmen, we would at last be forced to stop the payment of land revenue and taxes."

Abdul Ghaffar returned from his tour of the Hazara district on the 18th of November. His further activities were curtailed for a few days owing to an attack of fever. At a meeting held on the 21st at Utmanzai, presided over by Abdul Ghaffar, it was decided not to take water from the government canals in the Hashtanagar and Baizai areas for the rabi harvest unless the water rates were reduced, and picket the channels of those who refuse to abide by this decision.

At some of the public meetings a verse was recited: "O God, make Fakhr-e-Afghan our king." "This wish and this thought of yours is a direct consequence of your servitude," he warned. "You want to cast off the British yoke to fall into my servitude. Please, give up this idea of kingship. We have indeed been reduced to this plight by the kings. Remember, if I die, do not allow anybody to deceive you and become your king. This country belongs to all Pakhtuns and they shall enjoy its fruits. We shall choose our '*Mashir*' for three years only, and if he proves himself fit for the task, then we may retain him; otherwise, he shall be removed and another person shall take his place."

In early December the British press started a campaign against Abdul Ghaffar. "Holy war threat in India started by Abdul Ghaffar Khan with the help of the Red Shirts," announced *The Daily Express* in a despatch from a "leading authority in India":

"Beginning with Gandhi's Youth Leagues, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan turned the Red Shirts into Khudai Khidmatgars to whom he sent call after call to a *jehad*, a holy war: 'You shall be the foundation of the work to free the world from all infidels. You shall be the people

to free India from the tyrant English people who have ruined not only India but also the whole Islamic world. You shall release Islam and the whole world from the clutches of the cruel-hearted English nation. And there is no better *jehad* than to free your motherland from slavery, from foreign yoke.'

"To the ever-increasing army of Ghaffar Khan, he is not merely the dictator wearing the martyr's halo, but God-sent liberator of Islam."

The journal described Abdul Ghaffar as "a born publicist, an experienced blusterer and an unequalled opportunist." "Unrestrained and unrestricted, he goes on his way breathing fire against Britain, stirring discontent among the excitable tribes, calling on all good Muslims to be prepared to fight the British invaders. Abdul Ghaffar Khan is reported to have told his men to use their guns not to shoot 'your neighbours in the tribal feuds but to drive the British out of India.'"

The despatch concluded thus: "With this movement affiliated to the Congress, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is verily the emperor of the Red Shirts. Now this remarkable man has the audacity to challenge the British to arrest him as he is permitted to call his *jehad* from every Frontier hill-top in the sure faith that one day that call be dramatically heeded."

A despatch in *The Daily Mail* said: "The Frontier is an outpost of the Soviet Republic . . . the spear-head of an attack on India . . . with the Russian gold pouring in across the Khyber Pass . . . the Muslims being armed with the Russian weapons . . . their leader is the terrible Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a jail-bird and relentless enemy of the British."

In contrast, Mr. Robert Bernays, a Liberal M. P., author of *Naked Fakir*, has given the following account of his own interview with Abdul Ghaffar:

"His brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, suddenly rang me up on the telephone and said that if I came round at once to his bungalow I should find his brother there. Darkness had fallen and a thunder-storm was threatening. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, looking the embodiment of the traditional Christ, spoke in very broken English, and I had to get his brother to interpret for me.

"This is the gist of what he said to me: 'The Government of India misunderstands my movement. I do not hate the British. I only want the same reforms for the N.-W. Frontier Province as for the rest of India. I am not declaring against the payment of revenue. I am a landlord myself and I have paid my revenue. I have received no money from Russia. I have no connection with Soviet Russia. The British have put me in prison, but I do not hate them. My movement is social as well as political. I teach the Red Shirts to love their neighbours and speak the

truth. The Muslims are a warlike race; they do not take easily to the gospel of non-violence. I am doing my best to teach it to them.'

"The impression of him which I recorded in my diary that night is: Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a kindly, gentle and rather lovable man. As well think that old George Lansbury is a dangerous revolutionary, as imagine that Abdul Ghaffar Khan is the relentless enemy of the Raj."

In the Frontier Province, during the truce, there was a permanent state of tension and the government was a military affair, with special laws and ordinances and heavy punishment. To oppose this cruel state of affairs, Abdul Ghaffar led a great agitation and he soon became a bugbear to the Government. From village to village he went striding along, carrying his six-feet-three of the Pathan manhood, establishing centres of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the whole province was soon covered by this organization. They were thoroughly peaceful, not a single definite charge of violence against them was proved. This rapid growth of a disciplined movement, near the turbulent frontier, closely allied to the Indian national movement, thoroughly upset the N.-W. Frontier Government.

Sir Ralph Griffith, the Chief Commissioner of the Frontier Province, was to hold a durbar on December 22 and he invited Abdul Ghaffar. But on his refusal he sent an order that he wanted to meet him. Abdul Ghaffar ignored the summons. Then he sent a policeman to fetch him. On meeting the Chief Commissioner, Abdul Ghaffar told him: "I am a plain man. I like a straight talk. Do not try to be diplomatic with me." Sir Ralph Griffith replied: "Khan Saheb, politics is a game with its chess-board moves and counter-moves. I checkmate you and you checkmate me, if you can." "Then, I am not the man for you," he replied and rose to go. Sir Ralph changed the note and detained him and the interview proceeded.

During the interview the Chief Commissioner referred to the three possible dangers facing the country: first, from the tribesmen; second, from Afghanistan; third, from Soviet Russia. Abdul Ghaffar told him that if he were really worried over the tribesmen and if he wanted to reform them, then he was prepared to co-operate with him and help him, provided he abandoned his present tribal policy and treated tribesmen as his friends and not his foes. "With our co-operation you should introduce such a scheme which will benefit them," he said.

The Chief Commissioner picked a pencil and paper and began to take down detailed notes of the interview. Abdul Ghaffar further said: "If you utilize half the amount of money spent in the ruination and killing of tribesmen, on the introduction of cottage industries in their territory, they will be able to earn an honourable and independent

livelihood and learn industry, art and trade. Schools should be built in the tribal area for helping the children to lead a new life. Hospitals should be opened for their succour. Such facilities will enable these chivalrous and brave people to become useful members of the Pakhtun society."

As regards Afghanistan he told him that there was no danger from that side. "The Government of Afghanistan has always been friendly to you, so much so that any government that you disapprove of there, cannot exist. Secondly, the Afghans are our blood-brothers, and when you are friendly to us, they will also be your friends."

"The best way to face the Russian danger," he said, "was to grant us our rights to become masters of our land. We, Pakhtuns, are a large community, stretching from the Amu to the middle of the Punjab, and no one can dominate us. If one thinks of waging a war against us, we are willing to sacrifice everything for the protection of our country."

Sir Ralph Griffith noted down the points and told Abdul Ghaffar that he was proceeding to New Delhi for consultation with the Viceroy. From his expression Abdul Ghaffar inferred that he was sympathetic to his proposals.

Sir Ralph told Abdul Ghaffar, "I do hope that you will meet me sometime again."

"Oh, yes," he said, "if compelled by circumstances like those which brought us together today."

"Look at those people there, the Khans and Khan Bahadurs," Sir Ralph said. "They wait for an interview with me for days together, but I don't meet them. And in spite of my repeated requests you don't want to oblige me."

Abdul Ghaffar laughingly said: "Sir Ralph, these people are around you for personal gains. I have no desire to approach you for that. Why should I then tire myself out that way?"

Sir Ralph banged the table, saying: "An unfortunate government from which the honest people keep away and which is surrounded by dishonest people, is destined to be doomed. May God help the British Government!"

After the interview the Chief Commissioner left for Delhi to meet the Viceroy. "I was encouraged to believe that if God wills, my country and community would be benefited to some extent," observes Abdul Ghaffar. "Having seen the Viceroy, as soon as he returned, Sir Ralph clamped me in jail on December 24, 1931. I was then the first to be arrested in India."

The Government authorized action against the Khudai Khidmatgars on the Christmas Day, 1931, when six columns of troops occupied the

city of Peshawar and the tactical points in the rural area. On the night of December 24, Abdul Ghaffar, Dr. Khan Sahib and all the leaders throughout the district were arrested.

The Khan brothers were arrested under regulation 3 of 1818 and taken to the Attock Bridge and put in a special train. Dr. Khan Sahib's eldest son, Sadulla Khan, who had just returned from England and had become secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, was arrested and put in the same train as his father and uncle. Mrs. Khan Sahib, who had left for her village a couple of days earlier, and her whole family were aroused at midnight from their sleep and asked to vacate the house to allow the police to effect a thorough search; and Obeid-ullah Khan, the second son, who was still convalescing, was arrested. Though the father and sons were arrested at the same time, Government would not keep them together. Dr. Khan Sahib was taken off the special train to Naini Jail at Allahabad, Abdul Ghaffar to Hazaribag Jail in Bihar, and the elder son, Sadulla Khan, to Benares Jail. All that were left at home were the two wives of Dr. Khan Sahib and their minor children. Their two sisters had taken part in the agitation, as did the thousands of Pathan women who had attended several public meetings and processions, but they were not arrested. Their sons were, however, arrested, cousins, near and remote, were arrested, and then followed a wholesale round-up of all the important Khudai Khidmatgars.

Describing an incident on the train, Abdul Ghaffar says: "Whenever we opened the window shutters of our compartment, a Punjabi Police Inspector promptly closed them, so that none could see us. I told him, 'Well, young man, we are not women that you are closing the windows for screening us from the public gaze.' But he was not disconcerted. When we reached the United Provinces, a British officer and a white sergeant came to take us under their charge. The officer approached me, opened the door of my compartment and said, 'Please, get down and have a stroll on the platform to ease your legs.' Mark the difference between this Englishman and the Punjabi Muslim police officer. We are fighting the British for such Muslims. While I was seated in the compartment, the British officer came to me with a glass of liquor in his hand, offered it to me with affection and said, 'Drink it.' He was surprised when I told him that I don't drink. I shall never forget his sympathy and concern for me."

The Chief Commissioner issued a communique, followed by a long printed account, running to some 24 pages, recounting month by month and almost day by day the activities of Abdul Ghaffar and the Khudai Khidmatgars that lead to mass arrests and the promulgation of fifteen drastic ordinances. Ordinance no. 13, conferring special powers on the

Government of the Frontier Province and its officers, for the purpose of maintaining law and order, ran to sixty-one clauses.

A summary of the events published in the government publication, *India in 1931–2*, is as follows:

"A Red Shirt camp was set up in the Peshawar district early in December, tents being pitched and parades and manoeuvres held in military style. Attempts were also made to extend the Red Shirt movement across the border into the tribal areas, and inflammatory pamphlets were distributed in the Swat territory with the object of stirring up disaffection against its ruler. The Prime Minister's announcement of the 1st December promising early constitutional reforms in the province was received with general satisfaction, but evoked no response from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. On the contrary, his speeches became more hostile in tone and his preparations for an early renewal of the struggle, including the development of the Red Shirt organization, more pronouced. On the 12th December, in a speech which shows clearly enough his connection with the Congress, he said: 'The people complain against me for having joined the Congress by selling my own nation. The Congress is a national and not a Hindu body. The Congress as a body is working against the Britishers. The British nation is the enemy of the Congress and of the Pathans. I have, therefore, joined it and made common cause with the Congress to get rid of the British.' Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother refused the invitation to the Chief Commissioner's Durbar fixed for the 22nd of December at which it was generally known an important announcement would be made in regard to the introduction of the reforms. On the 20th December, two days before the Commissioner's Durbar, a meeting of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee resolved that the Prime Minister's announcement was unsatisfactory, that the object of the Red Shirt organization was to attain complete independence, that the All-India Congress Committee should be asked to put an end to the Irwin-Gandhi settlement, and that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan should proceed to Bombay to discuss with Mr. Gandhi plans for the resumption of civil disobedience. It was also resolved to hold a mass meeting on the New Year's Day at which the Congress flag too would be unfurled. Preparations were speedily put in train to make this ceremony an impressive demonstration of Red Shirt strength and preparedness. In the face of this menace to orderly government it was obviously impossible to confine action within the limits of ordinary law, and on the 24th of December certain ordinances were promulgated and applied to the province. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and some other leaders were arrested by surprise on the night of the 24th of December and the Peshawar district was occupied by six mobile

columns. With the exception of a disturbance on the 29th December when a very large and disorderly crowd had to be dispersed by force, the Peshawar district was speedily brought under control and in the last week of the month, close upon one lakh rupees were realized in land revenue. A serious disturbance, however, occurred in Kohat on December 26 when large crowds evidently bent on forcing the entry into the cantonment resolutely refused to disperse despite a warning and personal appeal from the Deputy-Commissioner. Their behaviour became increasingly turbulent, the arrest of the leaders was resisted and stones were thrown at the troops. It became necessary, therefore, to disperse the crowds and, owing to the resistance offered, to resort to fire, fourteen persons being killed and some thirty wounded before the situation was brought under control. The area from which the majority of the demonstrators had been drawn was visited the next day by the local officials when the villagers admitted their fault and promised to abandon the Red Shirt movement. From this point the general situation was brought under control."

Ordinance Raj

1931–2

DURING Gandhi's absence in Britain, the political situation in India deteriorated. The truce from the very beginning had been one-sided; repression had continued. The Bardoli inquiry collapsed, the situation in the United Provinces worsened. Bengal was seething with indignation. Two of the detenus had been killed and twenty injured in the firing at Hijli camp. The terrorists raised their heads and the Government intensified repression and promulgated ordinances in Bengal, the Frontier Province and the United Provinces. On December 26, 1931, while Jawaharlal Nehru was on his way to Bombay to meet Gandhi, he was arrested. A couple of days earlier Abdul Ghaffar and almost all his close associates had been arrested.

As soon as Gandhi landed in Bombay on December 28, 1931, he stated that he regarded the ordinances as a challenge to the Congress. But at the same time he reiterated that he would try every means to avoid another fiery ordeal. This he repeated at a public meeting that evening when he condemned the terrorist activities in Bengal as also the Government's attempt to "unman a whole race". No less than five special ordinances were in operation. "I take it," he said, "that these are Christmas gifts from Lord Willingdon, our Christian Viceroy. Even if there is a single ray of hope, I will preserve and not abandon negotiations. But if I don't succeed, I will invite you to join me in struggle which will be a fight to a finish. In the last fight the people had to face lathis, but this time they would have to face bullets. I would not flinch from sacrificing even a million lives for India's liberty. I told this to the English people in England."

Addressing a meeting of the Welfare of India League Gandhi said that he had pledged to many British friends that despite the disappointing result of the Round Table Conference he would explore all avenues of co-operation. What, however, he found on his arrival was "impenetrable darkness". "The grim reality with which I find myself face to face is an ordinance for which there is no parallel whatsoever, an inhuman piece of legislation, if it can be called by the name of legislation." For the penalty for defying the order against agrarian agitation was bullets. Except in cases where defiance was violent, this penalty was not justified.

Some of the Europeans at the meeting asked whether Gandhi could

hold out the hope of co-operation if the ordinance objected to were withdrawn. "That," he admitted, "would certainly remove an obstacle in the way and render the atmosphere more favourable." "Could you not visit the Frontier Province and meet officials before you condemn the ordinance?" was another question. "May I tell you", observed Gandhi, "that I tried thrice last year to visit the Frontier Province and failed. After the truce I asked Lord Irwin if I might do so. I wanted to co-operate fully and so I would like to have not only his permission but encouragement. But he said no. Then I pleaded with Lord Willingdon twice, but again failed. Lord Irwin felt that my presence would create a ferment. Lord Willingdon felt very much the same. If you like, I shall try it a fourth time, but if any of you have the ear of the Government, I would ask you to be my attorneys and obtain the Government's permission. I do not like to commit civil disobedience if I am ordered not to go and start it at the wrong end. I would start it at the right end and put the Government in the wrong."

"But how would you deal with seditious organizations, subversive of law and order?"

"Sedition is an elastic term," replied Gandhi. "Even if you mean by 'subversive' organizations those wanting to usurp the power of government, they should not be dealt with by ordinances. So you know the Government is fast estranging even its supporters by these ordinances. They may verbally say, 'Yes, yes,' but they really mean, 'No, no.' You want me to think of Bengal and say what I want to do to stop assassinations. No society should tolerate assassinations, I admit. That does not mean that all suspects are to be treated as assassins. Why are these assassinations in Bengal and in other provinces? I will go to the root cause of the disease. Two mad girls killed an innocent magistrate. They had drunk deep of the poison of hate and were given to exaggeration, but beneath it all there was a substratum of truth which would dement not only unsophisticated girls in Bengal but also anyone in any province. I yield to no Englishman in condemning violence. I would go with Englishmen to any length to stamp it out by humane methods but never in the manner of General Dyer. Do you expect to hammer out a constitution in this atmosphere of ordinances? It is a forlorn hope. It does not redound to the credit of Englishmen to rule by ordinances, nor to the credit of Indians to be ruled by them."

At the conclusion of the meeting at midnight, Gandhi remarked: "I landed in the hope that I should find out ways and means of tendering co-operation, but when I find that at every step there is a huge boulder, what am I to do? I am dying to find ways and means, but see not a ray of hope. In a state such as the present, people believing in violence would

rise up in open rebellion, but what are people pledged to non-violence to do? Their only remedy is non-violent disobedience. I want every Englishman and Englishwoman to search their hearts in these days of Christmas."

Gandhi lost no time and sat with the Congress Working Committee to review the situation. He advised the committee to defer their decision till he had a chance of ascertaining Government's view, of which he wanted to be sure before launching a struggle. It was, therefore, suggested that the committee should adjourn and that he immediately seek an interview with the Viceroy. This proposal was overruled by the majority of members and it was decided that Gandhi should send a telegram to Lord Willingdon acquainting him with the Congress viewpoint. Gandhi, therefore, on December 29 sent a telegram to the Viceroy saying: "I was unprepared on landing yesterday to find Frontier and United Provinces ordinances, shootings in Frontier and arrests of valued comrades in both, on the top of Bengal ordinance, awaiting me. I do not know whether I am to regard them as indication that friendly relations between us are closed or whether you expect me still to see you and receive guidance from you as to the course I am to pursue in advising Congress. I would esteem a wire in reply."

In a telegram, dated December 31st, the Private Secretary to the Viceroy said:

"His Excellency wishes me to say that he and his Government desire to have friendly relations with all political parties and with all sections of the public and in particular to secure co-operation of all in great work of the constitutional reforms, which they are determined to push forward with minimum delay. Co-operation, however, must be mutual and His Excellency and his Government cannot reconcile activities of Congress in the United Provinces and North-West Frontier Province with spirit of friendly co-operation which good of India demands . . .

"In North-West Frontier Province Abdul Ghaffar Khan and bodies he controlled have continuously engaged in activities against Government and in fomenting racial hatred. He and his friends have persistently refused all overtures by the Chief Commissioner to secure their co-operation and rejecting the declaration of the Prime Minister, have declared in favour of complete independence. Abdul Ghaffar Khan has delivered numerous speeches open to no other construction than as incitements to revolution and his adherents have attempted to stir up trouble in tribal areas. The Chief Commissioner with the approval of His Excellency's Government has shown utmost forbearance and to the last moment continued his efforts to secure assistance of Abdul Ghaffar Khan in carrying into effect, with the least possible delay, intentions

of His Majesty's Government regarding the constitutional reforms in the province. The Government refrained from taking special measures until activities of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates and in particular open and intensive preparations for an early conflict with Government created a situation of such grave menace to peace of province and of tribal areas as to make it impossible further to delay action. His Excellency understands that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was in August last made responsible for leading Congress movement in province and that volunteer organizations he controlled were specifically recognized by All-India Congress Committee as Congress organizations. His Excellency desires me to make it clear that his responsibilities for peace and order make it impossible for him to have any dealing with persons or organizations upon whom rests the responsibility for activities above outlined. You have yourself been absent from India on the business of the Round Table Conference and in light of the attitude which you have observed there, His Excellency is unwilling to believe that you have personally any share in responsibility for or that you approve of recent activities of Congress in the United Provinces and North-West Frontier Province. If this is so he is willing to see you and to give you his views as to the way in which you can best exert your influence to maintain a spirit of co-operation which animated proceedings of the Round Table Conference, but His Excellency feels bound to emphasize that he will not be prepared to discuss with you measures which the Government of India with the full approval of His Majesty's Government have found it necessary to adopt in Bengal, United Provinces and North-West Frontier Province. These measures must in any case be kept in force until they have served the purpose for which they were imposed, namely, preservation of law and order essential to good government. On receipt of your reply, His Excellency proposes to publish this correspondence."

In a telegram, dated January 1, 1932, Gandhi said:

"I thank His Excellency for wire in reply to mine of the 29th instant. It grieves me. For His Excellency has rejected in a manner hardly befitting his high position an advance made in the friendliest spirit. I had approached as seeker wanting light on questions while I desired to understand the Government version of very serious and extraordinary measures to which I made reference. Instead of appreciating my advance, His Excellency has rejected it by asking me to repudiate my valued colleagues in advance and telling me that even if I become guilty of such dishonourable conduct and sought an interview, I could not discuss these matters of vital importance to the nation.

"In my opinion, constitutional issue dwindles into insignificance in

face of ordinances and acts which must, if not met with stubborn resistance, end in utter demoralization of nation. I hope no self-respecting Indian will run risk of killing national spirit for a doubtful contingency of securing a constitution to work which no nation with stamina may be left. Let me also point out that as to the Frontier Province, your telegram contains a narration of facts which, on face of them, furnish no warrant for arrests of popular leaders, passing of extra-legal ordinances, making life and property utterly insecure and shooting unarmed peaceful crowds for daring to demonstrate against arrest of their trusted leaders. If Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan asserted the right of complete independence, it was a natural claim made with impunity by the Congress at Lahore in 1929 and by me with energy put before the British Government in London. Moreover let me remind the Viceroy that despite knowledge on Government's part that Congress mandate contained such claim, I was invited to attend the London conference as the Congress delegate. Nor am I able to detect in a mere refusal to attend durbar an offence warranting summary imprisonment. If Khan Saheb was fomenting racial hatred, it was undoubtedly regrettable. I have his own declarations to the contrary made to me, but assuming that he did foment racial hatred, he was entitled to open trial where he could have defended himself against accusation. Regarding the United Provinces, His Excellency is surely misinformed . . . Controversy in the United Provinces is of a long standing and involves well-being of nation, of peasantry known to be economically ground down. Any government zealous of the welfare of the masses in its charge would welcome voluntary co-operation of a body like the Congress which admittedly exercises great influence over the masses and whose one ambition is to serve them faithfully and let me add that I regard the withholding of payment of taxes as an inalienable ancient and natural right of a people who have exhausted all other means of seeking freedom from an unbearable economic burden. I must repudiate suggestion that the Congress has slightest desire to promote disorder in any shape or form.

"As to Bengal, Congress is one with the Government in condemning assassination and should heartily co-operate with the Government in measures that may be found necessary to stamp out such crimes. But while the Congress would condemn in unmeasured terms the methods of terrorism, it can in no way associate itself with the Government terrorism as is betrayed by the Bengal Ordinance and acts done thereunder, but must resist within the limits of its prescribed creed of non-violence such measures of legalized Government terrorism.

"I heartily assent to the proposition laid down in your telegram that co-operation must be mutual, but your telegram leads me irresistibly

to the conclusion that His Excellency demands co-operation from the Congress without returning any on behalf of Government. I can read in no other way his peremptory refusal to discuss these matters which, as I have endeavoured to show, have at least two sides. Popular side I have put as I understand it, but before committing myself to definite judgement I was anxious to understand the other side, that is, the Government side, and then tender my advice to the Congress. With reference to the last paragraph of your telegram, I may not repudiate moral liability for the actions of my colleagues, whether in the Frontier Province or in the United Provinces, but I confess that I was ignorant of the detailed actions and activities of my colleagues whilst I was absent from India, and it was because it was necessary for me to advise and guide the Working Committee of the Congress and in order to complete my knowledge, I sought with an open mind and with the best of intentions an interview with His Excellency and deliberately asked for his guidance. I cannot conceal from His Excellency my opinion that the reply he has condescended to send was hardly a return for my friendly and well-meant approach, and if it is not yet too late, I would ask His Excellency to reconsider his decision and see me as a friend without imposing any conditions whatsoever as to the scope or subject of discussion, and I, on my part, can promise that I would study with an open mind all the facts that he might put before me. I would unhesitatingly and willingly go to the respective provinces and with the aid of the authorities study both sides of the question and if I came to the conclusion after such a study that the people were in the wrong and that the Congress Working Committee including myself were misled as to the correct position and that the Government was right, I should have no hesitation whatsoever in making that open confession and guiding the Congress accordingly. Along with my desire and willingness to co-operate with the Government I must place my limitations before His Excellency. Non-violence is my absolute creed. I believe that civil disobedience is not only the natural right of people especially when they have no effective voice in their own government, but that it also is an effective substitute for violence or armed rebellion. I can never, therefore, deny my creed. In pursuance thereof and on the strength of uncontradicted reports supported by recent activities of the Government of India to the effect that there may be no other opportunity for me to guide the public, the Working Committee has accepted my advice and passed a resolution tentatively sketching a plan of civil disobedience. I am sending herewith text of resolution. If His Excellency thinks it worth while to see me, operation of the resolution will be suspended pending our discussion in hope it may result in the resolution being

finally given up. I admit that correspondence between His Excellency and myself is of such grave importance as not to brook delay in publication. I am, therefore, sending my telegram, your reply, this rejoinder and the Working Committee's resolution for publication."

The Working Committee resolution said: "So far as N.-W. Frontier Province is concerned, on the Government's own showing, there appears to be no warrant for either the promulgation of the ordinance or the arrest and imprisonment without trial of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his co-workers. The Working Committee regards the shootings in the province of innocent and unarmed men to be wanton and inhuman and congratulates the brave men of the Frontier Province upon their courage and endurance, and the Working Committee has no doubt that if the brave people of the N.-W. Frontier Province retain their non-violent spirit in spite of the gravest provocations their blood and sufferings would advance the cause of India's independence. The Working Committee calls upon the Government of India to institute a public and impartial inquiry into the events that led up to the passing of these ordinances, the necessity of superseding the ordinary courts of law and the legislative machinery and the necessity of several acts committed thereunder."

The committee was of the opinion that "these several acts and others of lesser gravity that have taken place in some other provinces and the telegram from His Excellency, seem to make further co-operation with the Government on the part of the Congress impossible unless the Government's policy is radically changed." The resolution further said that the Prime Minister's declarations were wholly unsatisfactory and inadequate in terms of the Congress demands. In the event of a satisfactory response not coming from Government, the Congress Working Committee called upon the nation to resume civil disobedience. It appealed to the free people of the world to watch Indian struggle, "in the belief that the non-violent method adopted by the Congress gives it a world-wide importance, and if the method becomes demonstrably successful, it is likely to furnish an effective moral equivalent to war."

The Private Secretary's telegram, dated January 2, 1932, to Gandhi said: "His Excellency and his Government can hardly believe that you or the Working Committee contemplate that His Excellency can invite you with the hope of any advantage for an interview held under the threat of resumption of civil disobedience. They must hold you and the Congress responsible for all the consequences that may ensue from the action which the Congress have announced their intention of taking and to meet which Government will take all necessary measures."

"Time will show whose position was justified," replied Gandhi. "I

wish to assure Government that every endeavour will be made on part of the Congress to carry on struggle without malice and in strictly non-violent manner."

In the small hours of the morning of January 4, 1932, Gandhi was arrested and taken to the Yeravda jail and was placed under restraint "during the pleasure of the Government".

Not knowing that Vallabhbhai Patel had also been arrested, Gandhi issued through him the following message: "Infinite is God's mercy. Please, tell the people never to swerve from truth and non-violence, never to flinch, to give their life and all to win swaraj."

To the Englishmen he gave another message through Verrier Elwin: "Tell your countrymen that I love them even as I love my own countrymen. I have never done anything towards them in hatred or malice and, God willing, I shall never do anything in that manner in future. I am acting not differently from what I have done under similar circumstances towards my own kith and kin."

Among Gandhi's instructions scribbled for Mahadev Desai after the arrest was one of requesting Verrier Elwin to go to the N.-W. Frontier Province to discover what was actually happening there. Disquieting reports had filtered down to Bombay about the severe repression of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement; no journalists were admitted, all press reports were strictly censored and as a result there was a great deal of concern about the fate of the Pathans. Elwin was the first reporter to get in there and produce a vivid report, widely circulated all over the world and promptly banned in India.

"My father's wish was that I should repair to the Frontier Province as soon as possible," said Devadas Gandhi in a press statement dated January 7, 1932, "if only as a mark of respect and honour due on behalf of the whole country to the non-violent Pathans. Our comrades in the North-West Frontier Province are putting up a very tough non-violent fight against the coercive policy of the Government. They are not going to be cowed down easily and from what I have seen of them, they are capable of infinite suffering and sacrifice. Not one leader or worker of position and influence has been left in the province. And yet we read daily indirect confessions in the Chief Commissioner's statements of the discipline and non-violent courage of the leaderless Khudai Khidmatgars. I am hoping that their suffering will draw the sympathy of the Muslims all over India. If I am allowed to go to the Frontier Province, my first business would be to investigate the two incidents of firing. But I may be checked or arrested."

With the help of Devadas, Verrier Elwin visited the N.-W. Frontier Province and in a 20-page report he wrote:

"On the eve of his arrest Mahatma Gandhi sent for me and told me that he wanted some Englishman to visit the North-West Frontier Province and see what was really happening there. We did not think that I would be able to get admission to the province, so I tried to find some one else. Failing to do this I decided to go myself, taking with me Brother Shamrao, who was very useful for collecting information and arranging all details of the tour. I went openly, of course, under my own name, simply dressing in English clothes, instead of my usual shirt and dhoti. On arrival at Peshawar, we drove at once to the city to the house of a merchant, and the impression soon got abroad—very useful to me—that I was an English trader accompanied by my confidential clerk. The merchant was greatly alarmed at my arrival, not because he distrusted me, but because of the great danger of even speaking to someone connected with Mahatma Gandhi. The panic we spread everywhere by our presence was an eloquent testimony to the strength of oppression.

"At once we began to collect information. I went to a hotel in the cantonment and then I moved to a Dak Bungalow, where I actually filled in a paper for the police. I spent the first two days in Peshawar itself, collecting information from merchants, the lawyers, students, Red Shirts and other eyewitnesses. It was very difficult to persuade people to speak, and many would only come to meet me at night, creeping furtively to the back-door of a house or meeting me in some obscure room. On the third day we went to Hoshera, Mardan, Charsadda and Utmanzai—where the repression was at its height—, Belah, Mangar, Dargai and other villages, and had many talks with the villagers. On the fourth day we went to Kohat and, in spite of the utmost difficulty, got full accounts of the shooting there. The people were so frightened that a leading man of the town took a long walk into the country and met our motor-car in a lonely part of the road. Only so would he dare to give his information. On the fifth day, we went up the Khyber Pass, and walked from Landi Kotal to Zintara—there was occasional rifle-fire round us, 'just a family feud,' said our guide carelessly—and visited some of the tribal villages and discussed the situation with the Afridis. All this time, I learnt later, the police were searching for me, and how I escaped them is a mystery. Just before going to the Khyber Pass, I sent a friendly and straightforward letter to the Deputy-Commissioner telling him why I was there and asking for an interview with him so that I might hear from him the official view and thus present a fair and balanced report. His reply was to refuse to see me on any account, to put me under open arrest, to search my luggage, and to send me out of the province under police escort by the most inconvenient train in

the day, which went somewhere I did not want to go. During my stay in Peshawar, however, I was able to have the talks with half a dozen officials and English civilians. I may claim, therefore, that brief as my stay was, I was able to sound every class of opinion: village and city, Congress, civilian and official. I cannot claim infallibility for this report and it is known that my sympathies are with the Congress; but I am an Englishman and I have no desire to blackguard my own people. I have tried to give the fullest consideration to the official standpoint and have not concealed the failing of the popular movement. Indeed it may be said that most of the 'excesses' are fully admitted even by the local officials. They are not ashamed of these things. 'This is the Frontier,' they say, 'and you down-country people do not understand.' But down-country people do understand that humanity is the same whether it be in the Frontier or in Bombay.

"National activities in this province are largely associated with the name of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. This splendid and heroic figure captured the imagination of the Pathans. Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a great man—great in body, great in heart, great in his possessions, and now truly great in a spiritual outlook on life akin to that of Mahatma Gandhi. You will hear, of course, the most varied accounts of him. 'That old rascal,' is the description of an official in Delhi. 'He is no good, he can't shoot,' was the verdict given me by an Afridi in a little village fortress across the border. 'He is a Christ,' said an English lady who had lived in his family for eight years. Mr. Bernays in his *Naked Fakir* says, 'Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a kindly, gentle and rather lovable man . . .' His name is usually linked with that of the Mahatma though his speeches are more fiery and he has not the Mahatma's power of winning the hearts of his enemies. He is a very competent organizer. He is an autocrat, essentially a leader, yet he is gentle and loving, with a sincere love for the poor. The very spirit of non-violence shines in his face. When I saw him in Bardoli last year, I thought of Wordsworth's lines on another great highlander:

> In him the savage virtue of the race,
> Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead;
> Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place
> The wisdom which adversity had bred.

" . . . When I reached Peshawar on January 11, there was not a Red Shirt to be seen and the movement had practically been driven underground. Let us consider the measures by which this was achieved.

"On December 24th the Chief Commissioner promulgated three ordinances which gave the widest powers to all officials. They were able, under the ordinance, to arrest, detain or control people on suspicion.

"If Government was satisfied that there were any reasonable grounds for believing that any person had acted, was acting or was about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, he might be directed not to enter, reside or remain in any specified area. Penalty for disobedience was two years' imprisonment or fine, or both. The officials were given absolute powers to take possession of buildings, to control the supply of certain commodities of general use, to establish special courts and to outlaw any associations which they might consider dangerous. Under the ordinance, therefore, 4,129 arrests were made, including 3,531 from the city of Peshawar.

"Since December 25, the chief activity of the Red Shirts had been to send the volunteers for picketing from the villages to the town. The police take down the names and addresses of these picketers, which are always—it is their rule—faithfully given. Then a column of troops goes out by night to raid the village from which the picketers come. The column normally arrives at about three in the morning. The village is surrounded. The leading men are ordered to produce Red Shirts. If they refuse, they are severely beaten. If any Red Shirts are found, they are arrested, beaten, and their uniforms removed and burnt. The local Congress office is burnt to the ground. Perhaps, a fine has been imposed on the entire village for its Congress sympathies or some land revenue is outstanding. In that case, the police raid the houses and take whatever they can. In many cases they have entered the zenanas, the women have been roughly handled and their jewellery forcibly snatched from them. These column marches are very terrible to the poor villagers. Their sleep can never be secure. No one knows if he is safe. If a man himself is innocent, he may be arrested for the 'guilt' of some relation. Landowners are sometimes ordered to provide special police. If they refuse, they may be sent to jail. In one village, the brother of a Red Shirt general was told to provide and maintain twenty-five police. He was unable to afford it and he was imprisoned.

"The authorities soon found it impossible to accommodate all those who offered themselves for arrest. They decided, therefore, to take a hint from London Metropolitan Police and to order picketers to 'move on', beating them if they refused. In Peshawar city, the lathi is most frequently used in this way. But this 'moving on' is nothing like the genial and almost friendly orders of a London policeman. The beating is very severe. The lathi blows fall like a shower of rain, a policeman told me. 'Not even a donkey can bear it,' stated another eyewitness. Picketers are often knocked senseless, and their friends carry them away. In the villages these beatings are more serious still. It is a common practice for the police after knocking a man down, to throw him in the

icy water of a pond or river. I heard a typical story in Mardan, a little country town by a riverside, where all around, the mountains of the Hindukush rise like a dream. There was a public meeting near a mosque in the cemetery. The soldiers ordered the people to disperse. They answered that they would do so, but first they wanted to say their prayers in the mosque. When they began to do so, a lathi charge was made on them from behind. Many fell beneath the shower of blows and these were dragged out of the mosque by the police and thrown into the river.

"There is also an attempt to frighten the villagers by the display of force. Aerial demonstrations are carried out by the Royal Air Force. The troops are marched through villages and towns. Persistent propaganda is carried on against the Congress, and aeroplanes fly over remote villages and drop leaflets condemning its policy.

"I have already pointed out the extreme sensitiveness of the Pathan mentality to insult or humiliation. I heard many stories from the eye-witnesses of what these noble Pathans are bearing in the true spirit of non-violence. Batches of volunteers, stripped of turban, shirt and shoes, clad only in pyjamas, were marched through the Peshawar city by the military. At Utmanzai the people were ordered to salute any European who passed by; if they failed to do so, they were beaten. In another village, so a policeman told us, 'The soldiers collected money as if they were Moguls. They took one rupee and eight annas from each villager and said, "If you have not got it, send your wives to earn it."' In another place the police compelled the Red Shirts to beat one another and tried to make them the laughing-stock of the village.

"These then have been the chief methods used by the Government in their attempt to repress the Red Shirt movement. Have they any justification in the violent conduct of the Red Shirts themselves? This is an important question and deserves full consideration. Every Red Shirt takes an oath to be non-violent. The leaders of the movement have continually preached non-violence. The Afridis despise the Red Shirts for the very reason that they are non-violent. Many witnesses have told me of the amazing patience and courage with which the people have borne lathi blows and even bullets.

"In a little village, under the great hills of the north, I talked with a group of villagers, splendid men with finely moulded features and kind eyes. 'What is going to happen?' I asked. 'It is hard to say,' was the reply. 'We shall do everything we can, even to the giving of our lives, but to bear this *zulum* without retaliation is indeed hard.' 'But will violence help you?' 'Certainly not.' 'Do you then believe in non-violence?' 'With all our hearts.' It is universally admitted that in the

last two years, as a result of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's teaching, the people have made great progress in the understanding of non-violent warfare.

"On the other hand, there seems clear evidence that this teaching has not yet succeeded completely exorcizing the villages of the spirit of violence. As of old, police officers who go out alone into the districts are insulted and abused. Stones and dung are sometimes thrown into their cars; children spit at them. Violent abuse is sometimes hurled at the police. Although there is no formal alliance with the Afridis, some of the villages near the border fed and supported the tribesmen when they were fighting the British last year.

"There have been a few cases of actual violence. At Kohat, Congressmen admit that, following the lathi charge, the throwing of stones and brickbats provoked the shooting. There seems to have been some stone-throwing at Tahakal Payan. There has been one instance of women pelting police with stones.

"But even so, instances of this kind are rare and cannot possibly be used to justify the policy of terrorization on which the authorities have embarked. . . Non-violence is a very new idea to the Pathan, not all the Red Shirts are saints, and it is hardly surprising if there are a few who have not yet fully grasped the principle of satyagraha. To say this is not to justify violence; it is simply to explain it. . .

"On the other hand, do the police use more violence than necessary to maintain law and order? The answer must be emphatically, 'Yes'. For, after all, the aim of the authorities is not simply to maintain law and order; it is to crush the whole movement. 'This Red Shirt business,' said an official to me, 'must be smashed, and we are determined to do it. . .' The bulk of the excesses are due to the military who urge the police on to more violent measures and themselves use the butt-ends of their rifles with deadly effect.

"I will give you a few examples based on very trustworthy evidence. In Charsadda, there was an attempt to picket the law courts. The picketers were severely beaten and were brought before the Inspector of Police. They were asked to take an oath to give up picketing. They refused and they were again beaten. Then they were ordered to abuse Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Again refusing, they were beaten a third time. Then loads of earth were placed on their heads and a mounted sowar made them run for their lives, chasing them and beating them all along.

"The prisoners have suffered greatly from cold. On arrest, their warm clothes and blankets are often removed as reward to additional police. In one jail, prisoners were kept on short rations and given only a single blanket for four days in order to make them amenable to jail discipline. The popular rumour is that this is the normal treatment for prisoners,

but I believe this is not so. But there is a horrid story—which came to me from a very reliable source—of how some hundred and twenty men were kept in an open place near Kohat for the whole of a freezing winter night. They were given no food, and most of their clothes were taken from them. In the morning they were ordered to apologize, and on refusing they were beaten. Their bodies were numb with cold and the bitter morning wind was blowing down from the hills—it was too much and they apologized. But when you read in the newspapers of so many apologies from among the Red Shirts, remember that they have sworn on the Koran not to do so, and only something that is very like torture can extract an apology from them. Sometimes they will be ducked in the icy water of a river that flows direct from the mountain snows. Sometimes the thumb of a man will be moistened and pressed as signature on to an apology paper. . .

"At present the Red Shirt movement has gone underground, but its spirit is not broken. Even its amazingly complete organization has survived. But its brains have been removed, its communications have been stopped. . . Beneath the apparent quiet there is a seething tide of indignation. The situation is critical. . . The ordinary Englishman in the Frontier is callous and without imagaination. He represents 'the old India at its worst'.

"My impression is that the measures of repression will never be successful. The Government has succeeded in creating for the time being the peace of the desert. In certain sections of the community it has set up a panic mentality. It has managed to make life unpleasant for a large number of our brothers and sisters in the north, but it has not crushed their spirit and it will never do so.

"The Afridis do not altogether comprehend the slogan of *Inquilab Zindabad.* They think that there is a living man called Inquilab, a great leader who has risen to lead the people to freedom. In a sense it is true. Leaderless and disorganized, repressed beyond imagination, the heroic Pathans took to *Inquilab*, the spirit of bloodless revolution, as their leader. It cannot be crushed, and soon through truth, patience, love and suffering, it will lead the people to victory."

State Prisoner

1932–4

By January 10, 1932 leading Congressmen all over India were behind prison bars. The Government, with Sir Samuel Hoare at the helm in Britain and Lord Willingdon in India, was in no mood for half-measures and within a short time the number of ordinances reached thirteen, which were described by Sir Samuel, the Secretary of State for India, as drastic and severe, covering "almost every activity of Indian life". The Congress had been declared illegal and together with it all manner of allied or sympathetic organizations, Youth Leagues, students' associations, national schools and institutions, Congress hospitals, swadeshi concerns and libraries. The lists were formidable and contained many hundreds of names from each province. Under the ban, 7,000 arrests were made, including 200 of the prominent Congress leaders. Churchill with his characteristic bluntness said that the ordinances were more drastic than any that were required "since the mutiny".

A novel feature of one of the ordinances was that the parents and the guardians were to be punished for the offences of their children or wards. The general feature of the Government's policy on this occasion was a widespread confiscation of property: houses and motor-cars, and moneys in the banks, both of organizations and individuals. And the deliberate policy of the authorities seemed to be to make the lot of the political prisoners worse than that of convicts. A confidential circular was sent to all the prison authorities stressing that civil disobedience prisoners must be dealt with severely. Whipping became a frequent punishment. Sir Samuel Hoare bluntly told the House of Commons that there was to be "no drawn battle this time".

But even these repressive measures did not suffice to keep India quiet. The boycott and civil disobedience movement continued, and risings, strikes and disturbances broke out in the various parts of the country. During the first four months there were 80,000 arrests. The people continued to struggle, but it was a struggle without leadership. The activities of the civil resisters were of the usual pattern, ranging from the holding of banned meetings and processions to refusing to obey any kind of official restraint order. The boycott programme was very extensive affecting even banks, insurance companies and the bullion exchange. All British institutions came under intensive boycott. The no-tax campaign was also much in evidence.

The three main features of the opening stages of the campaign were picketing, the boycott of the British goods and British institutions and the observance of particular days in celebration of some selected event. In January and February the most important were Independence Day, the Gandhi Day and the Frontier Day.

"Outside the Peshawar district, there is no Congress or Red Shirt activity to report," said the Home Department's confidential file. "In the Peshawar district, however, in the Mardan and Charsadda subdivisions and to a lesser extent in Nowshera subdivision the elections afforded the Red Shirts a heaven-sent opportunity of showing the power of evil they still possess . . . It was never expected that their activities would be on such a large scale . . . Polling took place in the Nowshera subdivision on April 7 and attempts were made by the Red Shirts in various places to picket the polling-booths; the biggest demonstration took place in Pabbi. Two to three hundred women appeared on the scene with the Koran on their heads to persuade voters not to record their votes. On April 11 polling took place in Charsadda . . . several thousands of Red Shirts were collected . . . Only one vote was recorded. The climax was reached the next day in the Mardan subdivision. Huge demonstrations took place at Katlang, Hoti, Mardan, Kalu Khan and Rustam and it is estimated about 30,000 persons must have taken part. Since April 12th the situation in Mardan and Charsadda subdivisions has remained perfectly quiet, but it is reported that the Red Shirts intend staging demonstrations in or near Peshawar during His Excellency the Viceroy's visit. Necessary precautions have been taken."

The reformed constitution conferring the status of a Governor's province was inaugurated in the N.-W. Frontier Province, the Viceroy opening the new legislative council on April 20, 1932 with an address. The Chief Commissioner was replaced by a Governor, and a degree of self-government was granted. Sir Abdulqayyum, a retired civil servant with no political connections, became the first minister of the province.

The report, entitled *Condition in India*, of the delegation sent out to India in 1932 by the India League of which the chairman was Bertrand Russell, has devoted a chapter to the North-West Frontier Province. The report says: "The impression that we gathered from our conversations with the official side was that the truce was a mistake, and but for the truce and the fact that the Red Shirts had become part of the Congress organization and had adopted non-violence as their policy, they would have been suppressed much earlier. The Frontier official did not look on propaganda, ideas of swaraj and independence and organization of the people, even with that degree of tolerance which the events of the recent years have in his colleague of the plains. It was also stated to us

by a very high official that Abdul Ghaffar's real plan was to create a Pathanistan and not to work for Indian self-government."

On the other hand, the Government of India wrote to all the Chief Secretaries and Chief Commissioners on January 16, 1932: "It is of particular importance to let it be known to Muslims in conversation or otherwise that the Red Shirt movement is essentially a Congress movement."

"The severity of the repression has produced something like a war on the Frontier Province," says the India League report. Though the display of force on the British side is overwhelming, no British official claimed that the movement has yet been crushed. That non-violence against the persons of British officials still remains the rigidly observed rule of the nationalist movement in an area where arms are so readily obtainable and in fact are openly and usually owned by the villagers is a tribute to the sincerity with which the creed has been embraced."

The effect of the movement in the Frontier Province on the trans-border tribes is described by *India, 1931–2*, as follows:

"On the whole the efforts of the Red Shirts to embroil the trans-border tribes met with little success in 1931, but the action taken in the North-West Frontier Province against the Red Shirt movement and the general revival of civil disobedience were not without repercussions in tribal territory north of the Kabul river. The hostile activities of the Haji of Turangzai and his sons and the Fakir of Alingar produced some unrest in the beginning of 1932 and were probably instigated by Red Shirt refugees from the North-West Frontier Province. Early in February an outbreak of the Painda Khel and Sultan Khel tribes in the territory of the Nawab of Dir endangered the safety of the Chitral road and some military and police posts were burnt. This rising was quickly suppressed by the Nawab, assisted by the concentration of a military column at Chakdara and by the threat of air action. Agitation continued however, and by March the situation in the Frontier had become threatening. A lashkar of Bajaur tribesmen entered Mohmand territory and reached the Danishkol area, only twelve miles from the British administrative border. The Haji of Turangzai, preaching a *jehad*, did his utmost to persuade the large and important Mohmand tribes to join the Bajauris in moving down on British Indian territory. Further north another Bajaur lashkar, including some contingents of the Utman Khel tribe, assembled to the west of the Panjkora river, on the border of the Dir State, and threatened to cross the river. Reconnaissance aeroplanes were fired at by these lashkars and by inhabitants of the villages from which the lashkars were drawn. Action on the part of Government was delayed in the hope that the agitation would subside, but it eventually

became necessary to issue warnings. These warnings were not heeded and on the 8th March certain Mohmand and Shamozai villages were bombed. Air action continued on the 10th and 11th and the house of the Haji of Turangzai was bombed on the 12th. By evening of that day all the lashkars had dispersed and with this improvement in the situation the road to Chitral was opened . . . It was found necessary to make daily reconnaissance over Afridi Tirah."

The North-West Frontier Province suddenly came into prominence in 1933, owing to an almost inexplicable blunder of the British delegation at Geneva during the plenary session of the Air Disarmament Conference. To the surprise of all the representatives of other countries, and to the great dismay of those whose minds were bent on peace, Anthony Eden got up and sought to make an exception to Article 34, which proposed the abolition of air-bombing, in order to remove from its scope "certain outlying districts". He put forward a parenthesis, on behalf of Great Britain, exempting "air-bombing for police purposes in certain outlying districts". Though the North-West Frontier Province was not mentioned by name, Anthony Eden made it clear in his speech, while defending the parenthesis, that the Frontier was in his own mind: "There were certain parts of the world the policing of which presented problems that had no parallel anywhere else; inaccessible mountain districts, sparsely inhabited, where wild and armed hill tribes had sometimes passionate appetite for disturbing the tranquillity of their neighbours. Unless order was maintained in those districts by this method, the only alternative was to use land troops, involving in normal times a large number of troops, and when order had to be restored, casualties perhaps of a heavy nature, due not to the fighting, but to the climatic and other conditions. That was bluntly the problem—the policing of these areas."

A full discussion took place when this startling proposal was brought forward, and it soon became evident to all who were present that the British delegation was practically alone in demanding such an exemption. Delegates from Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, China, U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and Afghanistan stood for the abolition of bombardment from the air. "The abolition should be absolute, unqualified, and universal." Claiming this parenthetical clause in her favour Great Britain stood exposed.

Abdul Ghaffar, the leader of the unique movement in the Frontier Province, was confined in a solitary cell of the Hazaribagh Central Jail in Bihar. No one was allowed even to step on the footpath in front of his jail barracks. Rajendra Prasad was in the same prison, but Abdul Ghaffar was unaware of it.

In a letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari, confined to a special jail in Gujrat, Abdul Ghaffar wrote from Hazaribagh on February 4, 1932:

"Id Mubarik. May God's blessings be upon you. After wishing well it is hoped that you and all other friends might have assembled again in Gujrat and might be enjoying yourselves the Gujrat jail. But it is regrettable that I am deprived of your company this time. I remember Lala Shamlal's 'class', exercise of Autarnarain walking swiftly in the mornings with Zafar Ali Khan, Muniji, the captain of the volley-ball team, and your 'parliament'. Nawab Saheb might have also come there. I shall be grateful if you convey *salams* to all brethren, individually.

"Now, please, listen to my story also. I live alone in a third-class barrack. I am closed up at night. Nobody can come to me, nor can I go to see any body. There is neither volley-ball nor badminton, nor rules nor regulations, nor a letter nor an interview . . . in spite of the fact that I am a state prisoner. I consider 'C'-class prisoners better off than myself. In my opinion this law had been framed for taking revenge. What should I write more? If I do so, perhaps, you would be deprived of this letter. And so consider this 'a grain from the heap'. But, well, we too have a God who might be seeing our affliction, and we are also seeing what He will do. I am quite healthy. Mornings and evenings I take exercise by walking. I have raised a small, beautiful garden by which my time passes. Perhaps, you may appreciate my garden if you see it. It is bigger and better than that of Zafar Ali Khan. You should pray for me and I will pray for you."

This letter to Dr. Ansari was withheld by the authorities, but his short notes addressed to his sons, daughter and brother were delivered after considerable delay.

In an official letter dated April 8, 1932, the Deputy-Commissioner of Hazaribagh wrote to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa:

"I visited the state prisoner Abdul Ghaffar Khan at the Hazaribagh Central Jail this morning. He does not give any trouble to the jail authorities, but he has told both the superintendent and myself that he feels that he has a real grievance because he is being treated differently from the other state prisoners in the matter of papers and interviews. He feels strongly the withholding of all letters. He is feeling the loneliness of separate confinement. I think that it is important that early orders should be obtained on the question of his letters, supply of newspapers and on the question of interviews. He has not been allowed to receive any letters since he was received in jail, and apparently all letters received from him are still with the Inspector-General of Police, North-West Frontier Province."

The Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa wrote to the Secretary to the Government of India, Mr. H. W. Emerson: "I am desired to report for the consideration of the Government of India and the Government of the North-West Frontier Province that the Deputy-Commissioner of Hazaribagh reports that Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who is imprisoned in the Hazaribagh Central Jail, is practically in solitary confinement and is inclined to brood over his grievances and particularly the failure of the Government of the North-West Frontier Province to pass any orders on his complaint about his correspondence. The Deputy-Commissioner is of the opinion that Abdul Ghaffar Khan is in a state of mind that may mean trouble hereafter in the North-West Frontier Province and considers it desirable that he should have someone to associate with. In these circumstances, I am to inquire whether the Government of India consider it desirable that Kazi Atatullah Khan should be transferred from Gaya jail to Hazaribagh to keep Abdul Ghaffar Khan company."

For over six months Abdul Ghaffar was completely cut off from the outside world: no newspapers, no letters, and no companion to talk to. Ultimately Dr. Khan Sahib joined him in the Hazaribagh jail. Mr. R. E. Russell, Deputy-Commissioner of Hazaribagh, on August 9, 1932, wrote to the Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa:

"I visited the two state prisoners in the Hazaribagh Central Jail on the morning of the 6th August. I found both prisoners in good health. They are occupying themselves in gardening and reading. Their only complaint is the difficulty of obtaining suitable books. The jail library consists mostly of novels, in which they are not interested. So I have arranged with the superintendent to get them suitable books from the Club Library.

"Prisoner Abdul Ghaffar Khan is worried about the education of his family and the administration of his property. He inquired from me whether he is entitled under Regulation 3 of 1818 to an allowance for the maintenance of his family. I authorized the Superintendent of the Central Jail to inform him that while Regulation 3 of 1818 provides for the payment of allowances to the prisoners' family where necessary, the decision to grant or refuse such an allowance is discretionary with the Governor-General. Abdul Ghaffar stated to me that he would not ask Government for any favour but that he wished to know whether as a matter of right his family is entitled to such an allowance.

"The regulation states that the officer in whose custody the prisoner is shall report to Government whether the allowances sanctioned are adequate for the prisoner and his family. Neither the superintendent nor I are in a position to discharge this duty and no report, therefore,

has been submitted. But the prisoner shortly after his arrival made a representation to the Government on the subject of the allowance for his family, and the Government of India in their letter dated the 10th May 1932 stated that they consider no provision for the purpose of a family allowance is necessary in the case of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The matter is, therefore, closed, as far as the local officers are concerned. But I think it desirable to report for the information of the Government the statements which the prisoner had made to me on this subject. Abdul Ghaffar Khan states that he has one son now being educated in America, two sons at school at Dehra Dun, and daughter at a convent at Murree. He says that he is uncertain as to what is happening to his property and he does not know what income, if any, is being derived from it. He wrote to one of his sons at Dehra Dun to make inquiries about the financial position, but that portion of his son's reply which dealt with this matter was erased by the censor. He is, therefore, much worried owing to his uncertainty whether his family is adequately provided for or not. He also pointed out that his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, has been granted an allowance for the maintenance of his family and he is puzzled at the refusal of a similar allowance in his own case.

". . . I refrain from making any suggestion except that it would ease the prisoner's mind if he were informed as to the position regarding the custody and management of his property and how his family is being maintained."

"For information" the Government of Bihar and Orissa recorded on August 17, 1932: "Abdul Ghaffar Khan has no doubt been informed of the decision of Government that they considered that no provision for the family allowances was necessary in his case and it is open to him to make a representation against this decision if he thinks there are grounds for doing so. And briefly, the position is that the North-West Frontier Government recommended no allowance in his case as the three sons to whom he has alienated all his land have a monthly income of over a thousand rupees. As regards his daughter there is no reason why the Government should assume an obligation from which Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan freed himself by alienating his property before his arrest. She is presumably being supported by her brothers."

At the end of March 1934, the Government of Bihar and Orissa wrote to the Government of India saying that "the mental condition of Abdul Ghaffar and Dr. Khan Sahib had been adversely affected by their prolonged confinement in the Hazaribagh jail" and they suggested that the Government of India "should consider whether it is possible to change the place of their confinement or to release them from jail and intern them in some place where they can do no harm".

The grievances of the Khan brothers, recorded by the Inspector-General of Prisons, were:

"They object to fish from Calcutta which has to be brought up in ice. Imported fruit is also considered stale.

"They object to goat's meat, and the mutton is of very poor quality. They do not care to eat beef. They have, in fact, practically given up eating meat. Chicken and fowls, they take rather sparingly.

"No suitable cook is available to cook their meals to their own taste. They have tried to train the Bihari prisoners but found them stupid. Dr. Khan Sahib is doing the cooking as best he can, and though it is better than the Bihari prisoner cook, he too cannot cook the varieties of the Frontier food to which they have been accustomed at home.

"They complain of lack of proper surgical and dental treatment in case of emergency . . . the delay in receiving such attention has made their teeth worse.

"Dr. Khan Sahib said that in Naini Jail his prisoner servants were so intelligent that they played bridge with him. He was not impressed with the intelligence of his Bihar prisoner servants. His greatest difficulty was to find a way to pass the minutes and hours which so monotonously dulled his weary days, which never seemed to pass quickly, and they both thought and wondered at what may even become of themselves and wished the Government of India to lay down their policy even if it was their fate to be hanged. Dr. Khan Sahib was fairly cheerful, but Abdul Ghaffar Khan was sanguine and determined and appeared to be somewhat irritable, and it seemed to me that his mental condition was not the same as when I saw him the last time, 22 November 1933. They certainly have struck on points, all of which cannot be remedied at Hazaribagh, possibly with a view to being moved from here, though they say, if all these points can be met, they would gladly like to stay. They add that all these difficulties do not exist in many other jails in India. They also said that it was costly for their relatives to come to Hazaribagh by rail for an interview with them."

Regarding exercise and reading of books, the superintendent wrote: "They get ample facilities to take long walks inside the jail, mornings and evenings. Moreover, they both engage themselves in vegetable and fruit (papita) gardening. But now they demand that some means must be found for them to have games of tennis, and for that purpose they say that two other suitable prisoners as companions should be found for them, so that in their company they may engage themselves in some indoor and outdoor games such as bridge, tennis, etc., and keep themselves fully occupied. They suggest that if they cannot be sent elsewhere, the two state prisoners, who are in Benares, namely, Dr. Khan Sahib's

son and Kazi Atatullah Khan, may be kept together with them. In this connection I may state that there is no tennis-court inside the jail.

"They are not satisfied with the books—mostly novels—contained in the jail library, numbering about 700 books, and whatever books they have thought it worth while to read, they say, they have already read. They want books on history, biography, travels, political economy, and philosophy, and books of similar character. They have also been supplied from time to time good books by the Deputy-Commissioner, including medical journals and other interesting magazines, such as are published by the International Geographical Society, etc. I shall, however, try to get some books from the Central Library, Calcutta.

"Their last contention is, if what they believe is true that the Government do not wish to impose any hardship on them, except only to restrict their freedom, they should see that they are made otherwise happy and contented inside the jail on the lines suggested by them and that their general health does not suffer. . . Their complaints have some substance here and there, but most of them, it seems to me, have originated from their present state of mind and, therefore, appears to me more of a fanciful nature. The real fact, as I gather, is that they are both fed up with the place, apparently, on account of their long stay here, and hence a change of place and environment perhaps may improve matters in regard to their present state of mind. I have very recently observed an inclination on their part to be easily irritable and unreasonable even in trivial matters and also to a growing sense of impatience and restlessness in their minds, and for that reason, they seem to be developing a tendency to exaggerate whatever difficulties they may have by their confinement in jail.

"They say that they have now been in jail for over two years and they still do not know what may be their future and, therefore, they are now, to quote their own words, becoming anxious about themselves. With such neurasthenic tendencies creeping in, they are undoubtedly showing signs of deterioration in the sense of dignity and self-respect which they used to maintain in a high degree before. Some of their domestic troubles, as far as I can make out, have added to their present state of mind."

On February 1, 1934, Obeidulla Khan, Dr. Khan Sahib's son, had declared a hunger-strike in the Multan Jail for Government's persistent refusal to keep him in a place which suited his health. It lasted for seventy-eight days. The Government made unsuccessful attempts to feed him forcibly. At the end of seventy-eight days, he was removed to Sialkot Jail in accordance with his demand and there he remained until his release on August 18.

The Khan brothers were both in Hazaribagh following the progress of Obeidulla's fast from the newspapers. The Government never informed them of Obeidulla's health, neither did they apply to Government for permission to see him or to persuade him to give up his fast. When day after day reports began to come that death was certain, father and uncle decided to send instructions how the dead body should be disposed of and where it should be buried. Within a couple of days of the letter being sent containing these instructions, the news came out that Obeidulla had won and had broken his fast in Sialkot Jail.

On August 17, 1934 Abdul Ghaffar undertook one week's fast in sympathy with Gandhi's fast. "He has stood the fast well and is in a satisfactory medical state," reported the Deputy-Commissioner. "He has lost 10 lb. of weight during the last six months and 21 lb. since incarceration. Dr. Khan Sahib is in good health and spirits."

The Frontier Government wrote to the Government of India: "The political atmosphere is charged with rumours that Mahatma Gandhi will visit Peshawar after concluding his self-imposed fast in August. It is believed that he will refuse to obey any prohibitory order and thus focus attention on Abdul Ghaffar Khan's release . . . In order to ease the situation as far as possible and in order to deprive him of an excuse for hunger-strike which might commend itself to public opinion, both in India and other countries, the Government of India may think it advisable to release Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Sahib. To such a proposal this Government would in circumstances raise no objection, provided neither of them is allowed to enter the Punjab, Kashmir or the North-West Frontier Province."

The Government of India was determined to keep the Khan brothers out of the Frontier Province as long as they could. "Abdul Ghaffar has established such a strong and superstitious hold over the masses and can so easily by his speeches work them up into a state of ferment that he could not be allowed under anything like present conditions to return to the Frontier." The personal allowance fixed was a couple of hundred rupees for each of them. Regarding the family allowance of Rs. 700 to Dr. Khan Sahib, the note explained: "This represents Rs. 200 for his English wife, and Rs. 200 each for the son and daughter by his English wife as long as they are in England. The allowance is generous, but from the report submitted by the Chief Commissioner in 1932 it appears that Dr. Khan Sahib's income, of which he was deprived by his detention, amounted to Rs. 7,189 per annum other than the income derived from land. By paying at the rate of Rs. 700 a month we are giving an amount rather in excess of this income, but possibly there are advantages in keeping the son and daughter away from India and free from

any contamination. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the allowances should be kept up."

Abdul Ghaffar's observations on the movement and on his jail life are as follows:

"To gain independence two types of movements were launched in our province: violent and non-violent. The violent movement was first started, and then after three or four decades the non-violent movement was launched in 1929. The British crushed the violent movement in no time, but the non-violent movement, in spite of intense repression, flourished. The violent movement engendered fear and cowardice in the people and made them morally weak and faint-hearted. The non-violent movement removed fear from the hearts of Pakhtuns and made them brave and raised their morale.

"The violent movement created hatred in the hearts of the people against violence. But the non-violent movement won love, affection and sympathy of the people. It generated in the Pakhtuns the spirit of patriotism and brotherhood and brought about a great revolution in their poetry, literature and way of living. In short, violence is hatred, and non-violence is love. If a Britisher was killed, not only the culprit was punished, but the whole village and entire region suffered for it. The people held the violence and its doer responsible for repression. In the non-violent movement we courted self-suffering, and the community did not suffer but benefited. Thus, it won love and sympathy of the people. Another great contribution of this movement is to recast their life that was replete with violent family feuds and internecine fights. The British considered a non-violent Pathan more dangerous than a violent Pathan, and that is why in 1932 they inflicted on them heinous acts to goad them to violence. But they failed.

"Some examples of the British atrocities are worth mentioning here. The Britishers stripped the Pathans of their trousers and made them naked. When picketing was in full swing in Charsadda, they undressed the volunteers, twisted their testicles with a tight loop of rope, and beat them till they lost consciousness. Then they threw the dazed volunteers into a pit filled with urine and faeces. In freezing weather the volunteers were thrown in water and many were shot.

"In the Haripur jail alone over 10,000 Khudai Khidmatgars were confined during the coldest months. Each prisoner was supplied with one blanket and one chapati, and that too failed to reach each and every prisoner. Many prominent leaders were whipped and were made to grind corn on *chakkis* and to turn *ghanis*. They were confined to the solitary cells. There was no cruelty and insult to which the political prisoners were not subjected to.

"In the Hazaribagh jail I was locked up in a barrack alone; none but the superintendent and the jailor could see me. I was a state prisoner, the collector visited me every month. Loneliness has always affected my health. The collector was a perfect gentleman, and though I had never complained, he noticed that I was losing weight and there was a pallor on my face, and the solitary confinement was telling on me. I suggested to him that Kazi Atatullah who was in Gaya jail and suffering from sleeplessness might be sent to stay with me. He recommended the Government Kazi Saheb's transfer to Hazaribagh, but the Frontier Government opposed it because he too was an eyesore to them. Instead, Dr. Khan Sahib was brought over to Hazaribagh from Naini Jail.

"When Dr. Khan Sahib found me locked up in a barrack, he said that in the Naini Jail he was allowed to go out of his barrack and move about in the jail compound. The Superintendent of the Hazaribagh Jail, a Punjabi, who had lived with Dr. Khan Sahib in England, was very timid. He told us, 'If I allow you that liberty, I shall be ruined.' Dr. Khan Sahib was adamant on this point and finally we were allowed to move about inside the jail. Soon we came to know that Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kripalani and many political workers from Bihar were also confined in our jail. Sometimes we met the Britishers outside our barrack and developed friendly relations with them. Our jailor, who was known as 'Chhota Saheb', was a decent man and sympathetic towards the national workers. He complied with our request to allow a political prisoner, on the eve of his release, to have tea with us. The Biharis are good-natured but they observe strict caste rules and do not mix with each other so freely. But since their coming in close contact with us, they improved a lot. Once, at a farewell party to prisoner, I served tea and *pakodas*, and my brother served him fried *brinjal*. Our guest relished the eatables and suddenly burst into laughter. He told me that once a Muslim postman delivered a postcard to him by carefully holding one corner of it. He took it by holding the other corner. And yet his brother made him wash his hand saying, 'You are polluted.' Another very strange incident took place when I offered a papaya to a Brahmin prisoner who used to serve us. He would not cut the papaya with my knife, because I was a meat-eater. When I asked him why he was jailed, he replied innocently that he was involved in a murder case.

"Although I was a state prisoner, no allowance was sanctioned for my children, whereas the family members of Dr. Khan Sahib and Kazi Atatullah received allowances. My son, Ghani, had to return from America without completing his course of studies for want of money. I owned substantial landed property but received no income from it, because there was none to manage the property after my arrest and at

the instigation of the Government my tenants cheated me of my share of the proceeds.

"When after completing about three years of imprisonment we were released on August 27, 1934, a ban was put on us from entering the Frontier Province and Punjab. As we had made many friends among the Biharis, we first went to Patna to meet Babu Rajendra Prasad and others. We were invited by Mahatma Gandhi and Jamnalal Bajaj to stay with them in Wardha. That year the Congress was to be held in Bombay and it was proposed that I should be elected the President. Babu Rajendra Prasad insisted that I should accept the presidentship, although he was already selected for the honour. I declined the offer and informed Rajendra Prasad: 'I am a soldier, a Khudai Khidmatgar. I shall only render service.' "

A Gift From God

1934

On August 27, 1934 Abdul Ghaffar and Dr. Khan Sahib were released from the Hazaribagh Central Jail but were prohibited from entering the N.-W. Frontier Province and the Punjab. The note marked "secret" recorded by Mr. M. G. Hallett, the Home Secretary, said:

"It was very uncertain what action Abdul Ghaffar Khan would take if released, or what reactions there would be in the province. It was important to note that he was regarded as something of a deity and His Excellency the Governor quoted instances of the manner in which the water from a well which was constructed at his suggestion, was regarded as a cure for many evils and was carried for very long distances by the people. It was quite probable that his arrival would give impetus to the slumbering movement. If he visited places such as Utmanzai, it is probable that large crowds would collect to greet him, and it is very difficult to say what the result would be . . . His return would, however, cause very great discouragement especially to the loyalists and to the intelligentsia generally, who were terrified of the Red Shirt movement. It was quite probable that even if he did not indulge in subversive activities, he would form the Red Shirts into a propaganda army for election purposes, which might result in their capturing the elections by their browbeating tactics . . .

"If he was externed from the North-West Frontier Province and from the western Punjab, he could be watched to see whether he was greeted by the people from the Frontier Province and whether his influence continued."

From Hazaribagh the Khan brothers went to Patna to meet Babu Rajendra Prasad and the other jail companions. Addressing a large gathering in Urdu on August 29, Abdul Ghaffar expressed his joy at the feelings of love and affection shown by the people. He lived in Bihar with his Bihari brethren. Those who had been in jails, could only realize the brotherhood, love, faith and the relationship created among them. For the first time, when he was transferred to the Hazaribagh Jail, he could not understand why he was sent there. The Government had sent him there with a view to deport him from his province and thereby dissociate him from his movement. The Government had this idea, but there is a Power which had another. Afterwards he realized that the Almighty had sent him there to accomplish a certain deed.

He said that so long as there was work for him he was in Hazaribagh jail, and when it was over he was released by Him. The other thing he wanted to tell them was that the people of the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Sind, particularly the Muslims, invited him and his brother to work with them there, but they constantly think of the steps to be taken for attaining the freedom of India and freeing the helpless people from the clutches of the tyrant. They wanted to form a unit of the Frontier people and to strengthen it, and all their attention was directed to it. They did not want to proceed further in their work without taking stock of what had already been achieved. They wanted to strengthen the unit to be in a position to fight in the battle of India's freedom. That unit would surpass all the provinces of India. They were servants of God. They also wanted to draw attention of those Hindus and Muslims who were labouring under a misunderstanding and who always clamoured for religion that though they were servants of God, they were forbidden to serve the people although it was claimed that there was the freedom of religion. The ordinances, cruel laws of India, were withdrawn, but they were still applicable to the Frontier. They might have seen that all the people were allowed to return to their provinces after release. But they were ordered not to go to the Punjab and the Frontier. He wanted to ask the Punjab Government as to what connection they had with that government. Some ordinance was passed in the Punjab in 1932, and in accordance with it they were forbidden to enter that province as well. He wanted to know whether they were thieves, dacoits or robbers, or did they want to commit violence? What was their crime ? The only offence they committed was that they had a love of their country and the oppressed. He wanted to tell them that he was a religious man and whatever he would say or do, would be in accordance with the religion. He would ask the Muslims and the Hindus to read their respective religious books. Both of them acted contrary to the teachings of their religions. The religious books were not revealed to be placed on shelves; the people should try to understand and act on them. As far as he understood the Gita and the Koran, slavery was a curse. He did not care if they were pleased or displeased as people generally did not like truth. He was a servant of God and was doing His work. He was not a leader and did not like to make any speech on the platform but was compelled to do so by friends. He was a soldier. He had no faith in theories but in practical work. The Muslims should consult their Holy Koran as to whether he was speaking truth or not. The Koran said: 'O Mahomed, you tell the Muslims that if they left the Koran they will be under His wrath, He will place them under the rule of a foreign nation.' They should know that religions

came into the world to raise nations and not to humiliate them. They should read their Gita. The war took place because a tyrant had usurped the rights of the weak. Arjun was not willing to fight. Lord Krishna told him that they had come to the world to safeguard the rights of the weak and to help them. They should destroy the oppressors. This was Hindu religion, and this was Islam.

Proceeding further he quoted another verse from the Holy Koran and exhorted the Muslims that they were created not only for their co-religionists but for the service of all, whether they were Christians, Sikhs or Hindus. He further asked what was religion, and he replied himself that religion was love, good morals and service of the creatures of God. Religion did not come to spread hatred but to do away with it. Religion should not create division. They should all meditate upon the teachings of their religions.

He added that if the country was of the Hindus as well as of the Muslims, they should not fight among themselves, otherwise they would prolong that curse. The Hindus asked how could they work with the Muslims and vice versa, but the day would come when they would be compelled to work jointly. Once when he was in Karachi, the talks of Hindu-Muslim unity were going on and the unity conference was in progress. But then he wondered why there was so much fuss over it, as unity would be beneficial to both the communities and friction was injurious to both. And they could not be united unless and until they realized their degradation and destruction. Indians were still asleep. There were earthquakes and floods in Bihar, and if they looked to the rest of the country they would find cholera and plague in some places, but they were quite indifferent. They feared that if they served their country, they would be sent to jail. If some one died a natural death in jail, some people would say that they tried to prevent him from taking part in the political movement but he did not listen and died. He asked if they did not serve the country, was there any guarantee that they would not die? Man is mortal. Why should he not die an honourable death? If India was of both Hindus and Muslims and if they did not want to continue in this curse, then they should do some work. Hindu-Muslim unity could not be strong unless they had realized its necessity. The people of the Frontier had realized it and the women and children had decided that they could no longer bear slavery. The little children of the Frontier said that India was their own country, over which they had a right to rule. The English had nothing to do with India. The English have their own country and what right had they to claim another country as their own? Their children were naked and starving, while the others were enjoying in their country. He then referred to

the people of Ranchi whom he had seen almost naked on the Ranchi Road. Such was the condition of their country. But they were complaining against each other. Self-interested people bluffed them in such a way that they did not know their gain or loss. Some people said that without Hindu-Muslim unity nothing would be achieved, but he wanted to tell them at the same time that there could not be Hindu-Muslim unity as long as there was foreign rule. The English could not stay if there was Hindu-Muslim unity. They ruled over the Hindus and the Muslims, who were running the machinery of their government. Then the Indians themselves were responsible for the Hindu-Muslim friction. He was surprised to hear the Indians say that their culture was such and their religion was so and so. He would again refer to their religious books and would say that a slave had no religion. The political power was with the English. Where was their religion? Slavery was a curse and still Indians believed that they were the most blessed. The Hindus believed that their culture was the oldest. The Muslims were proud of the conquests of Shahabuddin and Ghaznevi. The Muslims were nothing at present. It was useless to say my father was a king. He told them many things which he did not want to say. He did not want to go into details. He only wanted to draw their attention to their religions which described slavery as curse and swaraj as blessing. If they thought the country was theirs, then neither Hindus obliged the Muslims nor Muslims obliged the Hindus if they did something for the good of the country. If they freed their country, it would not be an obligation on any one. The foreigners were ruling their country. They should look to foreign nations like German, French, Italian and other small nations of Europe, who were ruling their own countries. No one from Asia was ruling there. Every nation was ruling its own country, but the Indians were ruled by another nation, and yet they were happy. Hindus and Muslims were fighting among themselves over the seats in legislatures. Both numbered thirty-five crores. Could they get the same number of seats? Their duty, being servants of God, was to serve the human race. The reforms were given a dozen years ago, but they did no good to the country, and the strange thing was that the Indians for whom they were intended fought among themselves after capturing the services. And the same persons, at the slightest gesture from the English, created friction amongst themselves, thereby strengthening the foreign rule. They should, therefore, leave all these ideas of seats and should think of the oppressed and try to free their own country, and all the seats would come to them. If they really believed that it was their country then why should not both the Hindus and Muslims arise and get to work? He would advise them to leave everything and

stick to the Congress brotherhood. He paid a tribute to the Congress that it was a representative body of the whole of India, which wanted to free India. It was neither a Muslim nor a Hindu body, but it was comprised of all — Parsis, Christians, etc. When the brotherhood of the Congress was once established, they would gain their objective in no time. He wanted the brotherhood of the Congress in such a way that if there was a difference of opinion and the thing was settled by a majority of votes, all should follow that line without any murmur, and that was discipline.

Some were of the opinion that civil disobedience movement should be withdrawn. But he was against such talk, as it was contrary to discipline. When there was order for fight, it must be carried on. When there was order to stop, it must be stopped. When he was in jail some papers published that he was in favour of the withdrawal of the movement. Even a government man approached him in jail to know it from him. His reply was that he did not talk politics in jail and for him the last word was with the Congress.

In conclusion he said that he was greatly touched by the plight of the people of Bihar and especially of Chota Nagpur. He had made up his mind that if the Muslims wanted his services, he was ready to serve them. The Hindus should not be perturbed that we did not ask them. The reason was that the Muslims were in a peculiar position. They were followers of a religion which had come to liberate the world from the shackles of slavery. A Muslim never feared to speak truth in the presence of a tyrant and an autocratic monarch.

He was a servant of God and his creed was to serve the creatures of God, irrespective of any caste or creed. He would go and consult his friends, and he would serve Bihar first of all. He again thanked all for the love and affection shown to him and prayed that the Almighty might hear the wails of the helpless and poor Indians and deliver them from the clutches of the oppressors.

"I have read the speech more than once very carefully," recorded the Law Member. "It is quite true that the speaker does not advocate violence for getting rid of slavery and the curse of 'foreign rule'. I have noticed in my experience that not infrequently even prosecuting counsel in cases under section 124-A lose sight of the fact that incitement to violence or advocating violent methods is not a necessary ingredient of an offence under section 124-A. What is required for an offence under section 124-A is that the accused by his speech or writing or by signs, etc., 'brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government by law established in British India.'

". . . Bearing in mind the expositions of section 124-A, which were laid down thirty-five years ago and which have always been accepted later, special attention is drawn to the following passages . . . If 'dwelling adversely on foreign origin' of the Government brings a speech within section 124-A, as laid down in Tilak's case, the present speech is very clearly within section 124-A. In my opinion, the case is not on the border-line. The speaker here is not referring to any particular defects of the government but is advocating the getting rid of it simply because it is foreign rule. I cannot imagine what can more 'alienate the people and weaken their allegiance' than repeated cursing of the present Government as a tyrannical government, oppressing the people and holding them as slaves . . . Such statements which impute tyranny and oppression not to any particular officials but to the Government or foreign rule as such, clearly excites disaffection and are expressly within the ruling of Tilak's case. If there is prosecution, provided Crown lawyers realized that it is not necessary that the speech should advocate violence and provided they appreciate the ratio of the decision in Tilak's case and authorities which lay down the principles explained in Tilak's case, there should be no difficulty in establishing a clear case under section 124-A. Authorities, no doubt, lay down that the speech must be read as a whole. But here the whole speech is directed to convince the hearers that the present foreign rule is a curse, that the Government is guilty of tyranny and oppression and it is the duty of Hindus and Muslims to combine to get rid of such government and to free themselves from their existing slavery. The speech read fairly and as a whole has the dominating idea that foreign rule, that is, the present Government is a curse, which has enslaved the people and must be got rid of by Hindus and Muslims unitedly.

"It is impossible to predict what sentence will be passed on conviction. While the court is entitled to take into consideration the fact that there was no incitement to violence, it ought equally to consider that the mischief done depends on the position of the speaker, as also the circumstances in which the speech was delivered . . .

"The speech in question was delivered by a man of influence, about whose release there was persistent agitation. The meeting was largely attended. It was presided over by an influential man of the province, who said that the people of Patna were anxious to have his *darshan*, and the speech was made when 'agitation and unrest' were prevailing.

"This speech ought not to be the subject of a nominal or light sentence. Heavy sentences were passed in case of Tilak and Nehru in which there was no incitement to violence. And in the latter case, my recollection is that people were asked to be non-violent."

The Government of India sent the following secret circular letter to the local governments:

"Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib are reported to have addressed a large meeting in Patna immediately after their release from Hazaribagh jail and the reports show that their speeches created a deep impression in the meeting. The speech of Abdul Ghaffar Khan contained references to slavery, tyrant and the curse of foreign domination. Abdul Ghaffar did not advocate violence for getting rid of slavery or the curse of 'foreign rule', but incitement to violence or advocacy of violent methods is not a necessary ingredient of an offence under section 124-A. Governments are advised that in as much as the speech dwelt adversely on the foreign origin of the Government, represented it as a tyrannical government oppressing the people and holding them as slaves, and urged the Hindus and Muslims to combine to free themselves from that Government, it clearly fell within section 124-A, of the Indian Penal Code.

"The Government of India understand that the local government have not sanctioned a prosecution in this case, and they agree that as the speech was delivered just after the speaker had been released from jail and as it contained no direct or indirect advocacy of violent methods, a prosecution was not necessary. At the same time, it is clear that a series of similar speeches might have definitely dangerous effects. The Government of India consider, therefore, that all local governments should take steps to have any speeches delivered by either Abdul Ghaffar or Dr. Khan Sahib carefully and fully reported, and that if any speech is found to fall within section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, they should not hesitate to institute a prosecution. The prosecution may be sanctioned without reference to the Government of India as in the case of Jawaharlal Nehru, but the Government of India would be glad to be informed immediately if a prosecution is sanctioned, and to receive reports of all speeches whether a prosecution is instituted or not."

On August 30 the police reported: "Abdul Ghaffar went this morning to Gaya and will preside over the Kisan Conference there this afternoon. On September 2 he addressed a meeting at Allahabad presided over by Purshottamdas Tandon. Though it rained during the meeting the audience stuck to their seats to hear the Khan brothers. Every child in the Frontier province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said, knew that India was their country and when a Pathan child saw an Englishman, it exclaimed, 'Oh, you are still here!' The people in the Frontier Province felt that slavery was a curse, and the country was theirs and should rule over it. He wanted to produce such feelings here."

From Allahabad the Khan brothers proceeded to Wardha as guests of Jamnalal Bajaj, to spend some time with Gandhi. On September 4 Abdul Ghaffar issued the following statement:

"I see there is a move in Bombay to have me elected to the presidential chair at this year's session of the Congress. I appreciate the underlying motive of friends who have started this move. No doubt they desire to advance the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity by conferring this signal honour on me, a Musalman. It is no doubt also their desire, by having conferred the honour on me, to express the country's appreciation of the sacrifices that my province has been able to make in the fight for India's freedom.

"But let me declare, as I have done over and over again, that I am only a humble soldier and it is my ambition to end my days not as a general but as a soldier.

"Apart from this feeling which has been uppermost in my mind ever since I was privileged to offer myself as a volunteer in the fight for freedom, is the fact that even my services as a volunteer and soldier are all too brief to entitle me to the honour.

"I would, therefore, ask in all earnestness those who may be responsible for the kind move to oblige me by dropping the proposal. May I, however, suggest that there are many other ways of rendering concrete help to my province."

At Wardha the Khan brothers met Gandhi after the lapse of three years and they had many things to talk about. They lived with Gandhi, ate and prayed with him every day. They lived in the midst of the ashram inmates and shared with them the simple fare that the community kitchen provided. Often Gandhi would ask Abdul Ghaffar to read the Holy Koran at the evening congregational prayer. Sometimes, when Abdul Ghaffar had forgotten to bring his spectacles with him to the prayer-ground, he would ask for Gandhi's, and Gandhi would take them off and pass them on to him. Mornings and evenings they went out together for their constitutional and, along with the inmates, collected stones in the fields and carried them to the Mahila Ashram to store them there for future construction. On their return Abdul Ghaffar helped Gandhi to wash his feet—the work generally done by Kasturba. They came to like each other intensely.

"The brothers' friendship seems to me to be a gift from God," wrote Gandhi to Mirabehn on September 24. "This will probably be my last letter to you while you are in Europe. Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan is with me. His daughter is with his brother's wife there. He wants the girl to come back and have her training at the ashram. He would like her to accompany you. Mahadev will send you the address. If you

see her, that is, if this reaches you in time to see her, you will bring the girl with you."

In forwarding a copy of this intercepted letter to M. G. Hallett of the Home Department, Mr. Bamford remarked: "In the first non-co-operation movement Gandhi bottled the Ali brothers. Now he is doing likewise to the Khan brothers. Fortunately, their influence is merely local." Mr. Hallett noted in the official file: "I think we should send a copy to North-West Frontier Province. The girl to whom reference is made is getting an allowance from the Government, and the main reason for keeping on the allowance was to keep her from contamination. This looks as if our efforts were useless."

When pointed out by an official that the allowance was paid in respect of Dr. Khan Sahib's English wife and son and not in respect of Abdul Ghaffar's daughter, Mr. Hallett wrote to the Secretary of the Frontier Government: "I enclose a copy of an intercepted letter which may interest your Government. It will be a pity if this girl (Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter) is brought out, but it does not seem possible for us to do anything. She does not, I understand, get any allowance."

A fanatical section of the Muslim press in the Punjab had not only attacked the Khan brothers for their advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity, but questioned their allegiance to Muslim faith for having sent their children to England and America for education.

Casually, Gandhi was once inquiring about the English wife of Dr. Khan Sahib and asked if she was a convert to Islam. "You will be surprised," remarked Abdul Ghaffar, "that I cannot say whether she is a Musalman or Christian. She was never converted—that much I know—and she is completely at liberty to follow her own faith, whatever it may be. I have never so much as asked her about it. And why should I? Why should not a husband and wife adhere each to their respective faiths? Why should marriage alter one's faith? You will be amused to hear that my brother's son, who has just passed his London matriculation and proposes to go to Oxford, tells us in one of his recent letters that boys regard him as a Christian and he does not know what to tell them!"

"I see," said Gandhi. "What you say about your brother's wife does surprise me agreeably. What would other Muslims say? Many do not think like you in this matter!"

"No, I know that many do not think so," said Abdul Ghaffar. "But, for that matter, not one in a hundred thousand knows the true spirit of Islam. That is at the back of most of our squabbles, and interested parties on both sides have simply fanned the flames of passion and prejudice. To what depths of degradation we have fallen! When I was

in Gujrat jail in 1930, I decided to devote my time to cultivating an acquaintance with my Hindu brethren, and we decided that in order to understand one another better we should have the Gita and Koran classes, each to be conducted by men who could teach with knowledge and authority. The classes went on for some time, but ultimately they had to be discontinued for want of any other pupil but myself in the Gita class and for want of more than one pupil in the Koran class—I forget now this friend's name. But each of us incurred a lot of odium, I being railed at as a Hindu and the other friend as a Musalman.

"But I kept on reading the Gita, which I read thrice. I think at the back of our quarrels is the failure to recognize that all faiths contain enough inspiration for their adherents. The Holy Koran says that God sends messengers and warners for all nations and all peoples, and they are their respective prophets. All of them are *Ahle Kitab*, men of the Book, and the Hindus are no less *Ahle Kitab* than Jews and Christians."

"But that is not the orthodox Musalman opinion."

"I know. But they fail to see that the Hindus and their books are not mentioned in the Holy Koran because the list there is not exhaustive but merely illustrative. The Holy Koran simply lays down the principles, namely, that those who have had inspired books, come within the category of *Ahle Kitab*, and I am absolutely certain that the meaning of the text includes all people who have inspired books to govern their faith and conduct. And I would go even further and would say that the fundamental principles of all religions are the same though details differ, because each faith takes the colour and flavour of the soil from which it springs.

"To take a very simple illustration. Both Islam and Hinduism lay the greatest emphasis on cleanliness. There is not, there cannot be any difference between them on the question of cleanliness as such. But practice differs. Islam lays down the use of dry tooth-brushes, Hinduism of fresh, green tooth-brushes. Hinduism insists on ablution daily or even oftener, whereas Islam insists on a full ablution at least once a week. What does this show? They merely show that Hinduism sprang out of the Gangetic soil where there was no dearth of water and that Islam sprang out of a desert soil where sometimes it was impossible to get a drop of water for days. But that does not mean that Islam can have anything to say against Musalmans having a daily bath or using fresh tooth-brushes. The difference in the practices enjoined by several religions connotes nothing more than the fact that each faith sprang from its own particular soil. I should not, therefore, disturb any one's faith. I cannot contemplate a time when there will be only one religion for the whole of the world. Every community will have to

derive sustenance from its own faith and it is no use one community trying to disturb the faith of the other."

That, however, did not mean that, in his opinion, there should be water-tight compartments between the communities. "The cry we hear at every railway station of 'Hindu water', and 'Islami water', 'Hindu tea' and 'Islami tea', takes my breath away. Why should a Hindu and a Musalman have any objection to drinking clean water from each other's vessels?"

There can be, however, no question of compulsion in this matter as in any other. Narrating an incident of the days of 1922 when he was in Dera Ghazi Khan jail, Abdul Ghaffar told Mahadev Desai: "I had given up meat for over six months simply out of regard for the feelings of the vegetarian co-prisoners. But my health suffered and the doctor advised me strongly to have mixed diet if I did not want to lose all my teeth. I reluctantly agreed, but then there was the question of cooking the meat. The superintendent said it should be cooked in the general kitchen. I said that I would rather go without it than have it cooked in the general kitchen and injure my vegetarian brethren's susceptibilities, with the result that the superintendent was good enough to have it cooked in a separate kitchen. But some of the Sikh and Hindu friends could not tolerate my taking meat diet. Without a tender regard for the feelings of one another, we are never going to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity."

"We have heard doubts expressed about your Harijan movement, too, Mahatmaji," observed Abdul Ghaffar during one of his talks with Gandhi. "Even the Yeravda Pact and your twenty-one days' fast have been misunderstood and we have been told that you had become a communalist. We have stoutly refused to countenance any such criticism. Yours is a purely humanitarian movement and those who belong to a faith have absolutely no business to treat their other brethren of faith as untouchables. We sent you from jail a telegram, to congratulate you, you will remember."

Mahadev Desai showed him a cutting from a rabid weekly issued by a Muslim containing criticism of Gandhi's fast and asked him whether as the writer maintained, Islam sanctioned fasting only of the orthodox type—abstinence from all food and all drink during the day-time and breaking the fast between sundown and daybreak. "Absurd," Abdul Ghaffar said indignantly. "I myself observed complete fast all the seven days that Gandhiji fasted in August last, drinking salt and water of evenings. It is a mockery of Islam to say that the fast as is observed by the bulk of Musalmans, is the only true one. The Prophet observed complete fasts, days and nights. I think he permitted eating after sunset

out of consideration for human weakness. The Prophet needed no food because, as he stated Allah sent him spiritual food which ordinary mortals could not get as they had not the faith that is needed for it. This paper's criticism is on a par with the one that tried to make me out to be a Hindu because I was observing silence every week or because I studied the Gita. All kinds of calumnies have been spread against me by some of the Punjab Urdu newspapers; there is a paper which loses no opportunity to make me out to be an enemy of Islam."

"He is no less a Musalman than any orthodox Musalman," observes Mahadev Desai. "I don't think that he has ever missed a single *namaz* and has the spirit of brotherhood innate in himself more than many so-called orthodox Musalmans. The elder brother having spent many years abroad and claiming, as he does, friends of various nationalities and creeds, is somewhat of an eclectic but he has inherited his father's religious spirit no less than the younger brother. Often enough he says in jest, 'My brother offers the *namaz* on my behalf also.' The greatest thing in the younger brother is, to my mind, his spirituality, or better still, the true spirit of Islam, namely, submission or surrender to God. He has measured Gandhiji's life all through with this yardstick and his clinging to Gandhiji can be explained on no other ground. It is not Gandhiji's name or fame that have attracted him to Gandhiji, nor his political work, nor his spirit of rebellion and revolution. It is his pure and ascetic life and his insistence on self-purification that have had the greatest appeal for him, and his whole life, since 1919 onwards has been one sustained effort for self-purification. I have the privilege of having a number of Muslim friends, true as steel and ready to sacrifice their all for Hindu-Muslim unity, but I do not yet know one who is greater than or even equal to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the transparent purity and the ascetic severity of his life, combined with extreme tenderness and living faith in God."

"Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a soldier," observes Mahadev Desai, "who has thousands upon thousands of soldiers ready to obey him and to do his bidding. He is impatient of all cant and hypocrisy, and he cannot understand leadership which connotes anything more than the greatest service. He is no new convert to the programme of constructive work. He loathes all programmes which mean show and no constructive work. 'There are numerous weavers in our parts but they are gradually dying out and I should be deeply thankful if I could spread the gospel of the spinning wheel in our districts. But it is no use my talking about the spinning wheel unless I learn to spin and do it regularly myself,' said he and sat down to learn spinning and began to spin even, well-twisted yarn in three or four days.

" 'Show us a truer socialist than Gandhiji,' he says to whoever comes to argue the socialist theory with him, 'and we shall follow him.' And he looks back to the days when there used to be a periodic distribution of holdings in their districts. 'The Khanship, which is only another word for a kind of zamindari, is the creation of the British,' he said to me as he was discussing this redistribution of holdings which I did not quite understand. 'Every such Khanship or zamindari was created in order to serve as a prop to the new administration that was being established, and I say this in spite of the fact that my grandfather as a Khan was thus placed in possession of hundreds of acres of land. This happened some twenty-five years after the establishment of the British rule in 1848. Before that we used to have a jirga of all the Khans who numbered all the villages and plots of land in every village and then cast lots. Every twenty years this thing used to happen. All, including the Khan, used to possess practically the same size of holding and whole populations used to transfer themselves from one village to another under this redistribution system. I could not think of a purer socialism than this.' "

Often enough in the Khan brothers' talks their thoughts ran back to those hills and the river and the little island, on which they had built a retreat, where it was their dream to have Gandhi for their guest. "You will have your ashram there, Mahatmaji," they said, "and we could not think of more peaceful and beautiful surroundings. The whole Peshawar valley abounds in fruits of all kinds, and we assure you that you will put on pounds of weight there." They talked of their sugar-cane fields and the rich, creamy milk of their cows, which they used exclusively for butter, and of their buffaloes, which they used for all other purposes. "But where those fields are and what is happening to them we do not know," they said with the home-sickness of an exile.

It was a period of intense introspection for Gandhi. His activities and utterances gave rise to the rumour that he intended to leave the Congress altogether. He confirmed it and gave reasons in a statement, dated Wardha, September 17, 1934:

"The rumour that I had contemplated severing all physical connection with the Congress was true . . . After due consideration of all the pros and cons I have adopted the safe and prudent course of postponing the final step at least till after the meeting of the Congress in October. One attractive idea behind the insistence on postponement was that it would enable me to test the accuracy of my impression that a very large body of Congress intelligentsia were tired of my method and views and the programme based upon them, that I was a hindrance rather than a help to the natural growth of the Congress . . .

"If I am to test the truth or otherwise of my impression, I must put before the public the reasons on which my impression is based and my own proposals based thereon . . .

"I have no other programme save the Congress programme now before the country, that is, removal of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, total prohibition, hand-spinning with khadi, cent per cent swadeshi in the sense of the revival of the village industries and the general reorganization of the seven lakhs of villages, which ought to give all satisfaction that one's love of one's country may demand.

"Personally, I would like to bury myself in an Indian village, preferably in a Frontier village. If the Khudai Khidmatgars are truly non-violent, they will contribute the largest share to the promotion of the non-violent spirit and of Hindu-Muslim unity. For, if they are non-violent in thought, word and deed, and are the real lovers of Hindu-Mulsim unity, surely through them we should see the accomplishment of the two things we need most in this country. The Afghan menace which we dread so much, should then be a thing of the past. I am, therefore, yearning to test the truth for myself of the claim that they have imbibed the spirit of non-violence and they are believers, in the heart, of unity of Hindus, Muslims and others. I should like also personally to deliver the message of the spinning wheel to them in this and various such other ways. I should love to serve the Congress in my own humble manner, whether I am in or outside it . . ."

When questioned about Gandhi's statement on his proposed retirement, Abdul Ghaffar told Mahadev Desai: "I am not surprised that he has come to this conclusion. I have never found it easy to question his decisions, for he refers all his problems to God and always listens to His commands. Every great reformer has been like that, and there always comes a stage in every reformer's life when he must take leave of his following and soar with ample pinion untrammelled by their limitations and weaknesses. But he does not by doing so limit but increase the reach and sweep of his services. After all I have but only one standard of measure and that is the measure of one's surrender to God."

Village Work

1934

At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee held at Wardha in September, Maulana Azad told Abdul Ghaffar that Bengal Muslims in general and Peshawari shopkeepers in Calcutta in particular desired his early visit. Abdul Ghaffar gave his consent, but Gandhi did not approve as he feared his re-arrest by the Government. But on Azad's insistence Gandhi consented. He had taken detailed instructions from Gandhi as to what he should say and how he should say it.

On September 30, 1934 a public meeting was convened in Calcutta at the Town Hall to honour the Khan brothers. Among those present were Maulana Azad and Dr. B. C. Roy and several other distinguished leaders of Bengal.

Addressing the meeting, Abdul Ghaffar dwelt upon Hindu-Muslim unity which, according to him, was the only potent weapon for gaining political freedom. Unless the social and political differences between the two communities, which form the bulk of the population of Hindustan, were dissolved they would not be able to proceed towards their objective. Once, Hindustan was supposed to be the "golden land". At present what was its condition? Its inhabitants were naked and dying of starvation. Slavery and foreign domination was the cause of this plight. The British never conquered India by sword. History proves it. They did it by treachery and trickery. Disunion among the communities also helped in the matter. He called on his audience to take to the study of Indian literature and philosophy instead of reading only Shakespeare, Bacon, Lenin or Trotsky.

In conclusion he said that the minority communities were now under a mistaken impression that with the ending of British Raj, there would be founded a Hindu Raj and their lot would be the same as before. Even if it turned out to be so, the country would retain its own wealth and the minority communities would at least be well-fed slaves. That was the difference between the slavery to the whites and the slavery to the blacks. He appealed to all the communities to achieve speedy unity for achieving their goal, the liberation of the country.

Dr. Khan Sahib next addressed the meeting and gave details of the Khudai Khidmatgar party which, he said, was purely a social service organization, but it had been given a political colouring as a Bolshevik organization by Government, who called it Red Shirt organization, a

violent organization. He explained its aims and objects which, he said, were service in any form to the humanity at large.

On October 2, Abdul Ghaffar received a welcome address from the students of Bengal at the Albert Hall. Among those present were Mr. J. C. Sengupta, Satis Chandra Dasgupta, Professor Abdur Rahman and others. Addressing the gathering, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"I request you not to call me Frontier Gandhi, because there should be only one Gandhi. And if there be two, then inevitably there would be quarrel. Mahatma Gandhi is our general and there should be one general only. So do not add the name of Gandhi to my name. I am not fit for the praise you have showered on me. I have not rendered the service you have eulogized. The praise is due to the non-violent method, which has changed the nature of our people. The Pathans used to fight for paltry things every day, but today that nature has been changed due to the non-violent creed. The Pathans did not think too much about killing, but how wonderfully they have become non-violent now! The Khudai Khidmatgars were fired upon, some five hundred were killed and wounded, houses were entered into and women were disgraced, but they never took to violence.

"After I was released by Lord Irwin, I was asked to attend the Round Table Conference but I did not go, because it was a waste of time. I do not want to revolt against the Congress for trying to enter the councils, but I may tell you that the Communal Award and the White Paper cannot be altered by that method. You can only do so by uniting the Hindus and Muslims. The British have given you some reforms, fully knowing that they will continue to divide and rule you. You will have to sacrifice and you will have to organize, then only you can achieve what you want.

"In the Frontier the Musalmans are 95 per cent, but service of all creatures of God is the motto of the Khudai Khidmatgars. On the side of God the Musalmans are not alone; the Hindus, the Sikhs, the English and others are also there. You should not call Khudai Khidmatgars as Red Shirts, like Mussolini's or Hitler's shirts. We are for the service of humanity. Our movement is religious and not nationalistic. There is a great difference between the two. One stands for peace, while the other for war. Win swaraj by non-violent method. Fight against oppressors, be they Hindus, Muslims, English or Germans.

"We did not join the civil disobedience movement, but still, in one night, myself and all other leading workers were arrested. This time I could work only for ten months and recruited three hundred thousand volunteers. The entire Frontier Province was terrorized and the women were disgraced, but we did not take to violence. Remember the Pathans

are very quick to take revenge when their honour and of their women folk were at stake, but in spite of that they remained peaceful. The non-violent movement has made us truly brave. This was mainly due to Mahatma Gandhi's teaching. The Government do not want the Pathan to be non-violent, otherwise why am I not allowed to go there?"

He asked the Bengali youths to launch a movement like the Khudai Khidmatgar and unite the Hindus and the Muslims after purging their hearts clean.

Abdul Ghaffar repeatedly appealed to the audience in Calcutta to turn their attention to the poor villagers. He told them that he wanted to serve the backward Muslim community and particularly the rural population of Bengal, because they were the worst sufferers. His own account of this work in Bengal is as follows:

"We stayed for a few days at Calcutta, where I was a guest of the Pathans. It was my desire to see the country-side and meet the Bengali Muslims and know all about them. I expressed this desire at several public meetings, but Calcutta Muslims did not help me in this direction. The Muslim Association dominated by Suhrawardy and his men, tried to stop me from touring the Bengal villages, lest their leadership be eclipsed. When I was disappointed by these Muslims, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, a distinguished Congress worker, offered to accompany me into the villages though he believed that the Muslim villagers had no life left in them. These villagers could understand only Bengali and so I needed a Bengali interpreter. Prafulla Babu and I left Calcutta for the country-side. In the villages I mixed with the people, talked with them. I explained to them that India was once a land of gold. In every home there was milk, ghee and rice. But today the children are half-naked, starved, helpless and miserable. I told them that so long as the country does not become free, their condition will not improve. I moved among the villagers for a few days and then convened a public meeting. About fifty villagers attended the first public meeting. A few days later a second meeting was held and two hundred villagers were present. Gradually, the attendance of these meetings increased considerably. As the tours progressed, I pointed out to Prafulla Babu that the villagers were not lifeless, but there was none to rejuvenate them."

Before returning to Wardha, Abdul Ghaffar went to Santiniketan, where his son, Ghani, was studying. Before an assembly of students and other members of the ashram in front of the Library Building, Rabindranath welcomed the guest in a few well-chosen words. He said Khan Saheb's visit was a memorable event in the history of the ashram and that it was fortunate for the students to have the opportunity of meeting him. It had touched them all, he continued, to find his confidence in the

Visva-Bharati expressed in the fact that he had chosen to send his son here for education when he was away in jail.

Abdul Ghaffar replied saying that he felt deeply overwhelmed with the warmth of the reception. He was highly pleased to visit the place, where he saw things much more than he had heard of. The great poet's ideals appealed to him as being truly necessary for India's uplift. He hoped that all communities would imbibe the poet's noble ideas about education, based on true spirit of religion. The feelings of communalism that threatened to stifle all of India's aspirations were largely due to misinterpretation of religion.

His visit to the ashram was a very short one for he left the next morning for Patna. But he did not spare himself and managed to go over all the departments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan and evinced very keen interest in all that he saw.

There was a farewell ceremony just before he left, in the yard in front of Uttarayan when Rabindranath read an address to him in Urdu, an English rendering of which is given below:

"Dear Friend—You are with us only for a while, but even that is a rare good fortune for us all. This is my hope that you will not think it a mere exaggeration or an expression of civility when I say that your presence has created a new strength and vigour in our hearts. Love is never taught by the word of mouth; the soul of a true lover is love's own touch-stone. When we come into contact with it, the value of whatever sentiment there is in our own hearts gets magnified manifold.

"We have you here with us only for a short period, but we will not measure the worth of the event by the standard of time. Those really great, whose hearts are for all, who belong to all the lands of the world, transcend also the bounds of moments; they are for all time. Believe me, the memory of this short visit of yours to the ashram will ever remain fresh in our hearts.

"Truth is the very foundation of your life, and I am sure that you radiate its influence all around you. We have realized this too that all our own efforts are every day being frustrated for lack of this devotion to truth. You have come to this land whose unhappy being is shattered into fragments, in order to fulfil the purpose of Providence to save her from the poison of fratricidal hatred with which she is drugging herself to self-destruction.

"I have not the slightest doubt that you have been able to stimulate the heart of our folk here with some of that great force of character which is your own. Pray accept the grateful homage of all of us. This is our earnest prayer that you be long spared to help this land, sick unto death, toward vigorous health and truth."

The Khan brothers passed through Raipur on October 14th. Over three hundred people were present at the railway station. Abdul Ghaffar made a short speech from his carriage: "If you go to the villages, you will see the real state of India. Villagers are dying of starvation and have nothing to cover their bodies with. This state of affairs exists throughout India. These very Hindus and Muslims were worth their weight in gold in olden times but they have been reduced to nothing through slavery. Indians have become such cowards that they are afraid of a constable and they do not show themselves if a sub-inspector turns up, while if an Englishman appears they are nowhere. If Hindus and Muslims unite, they are sure of getting independence."

On October 19th Abdul Ghaffar and Dr. Khan Sahib arrived in Bombay to attend the annual session of the Congress. They travelled by train in third class. A couple of hundred members of the reception committee were present at the platform to receive them and about five hundred volunteers, including forty women volunteers, were in attendance with their band. Over one thousand persons were present at the railway station. The Khan brothers were garlanded by K. F. Nariman, the chairman of the reception committee. The following day Gandhi arrived, and the Khan brothers stayed with him in a special hut erected in the Congress Nagar. They remained there till their departure with Gandhi on October 29.

Abdul Ghaffar had declined the offer of presidentship of the Congress and he would not consent to open the All-India Swadeshi Exhibition. The reception committee had to appeal to Gandhi to induce him to accept the invitation. Introducing him at the exhibition on October 20, Sarojini Naidu said that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a tall soldier from the Frontier, at least a yard taller than anyone present on the occasion. He was a plain, modest and simple soldier, who would very much like to sit behind a purdah if he were allowed to do so, not because he was a coward but because he was too shy of publicity. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"I want to say only this to you that the honour you have conferred on me of performing the opening ceremony of this exhibition has given me great pleasure and it is because I heartily like swadeshi. We had introduced swadeshi in the Frontier Province in 1931. Unfortunately, when I went to jail, it was discontinued. After that I had a talk with Mahatmaji about it, but he went to Europe and before he returned, the fight had started in India. When I go round in this country and see things, my belief and my faith in swadeshi increases day by day. I had been to Bardoli in 1931. I toured extensively in the villages there and saw the khadi work, but it did not impress me as much as it impressed

me in Bengal during my recent visit. Recently I have seen the charkha at work in the villages of Bengal. There the condition of Hindus and the Muslims is pitiable. In the village where I saw the charkha working, the villagers were at least able to earn a few pice and get one meal. Where the charkha had not reached, they had nothing to eat. I am telling you what I saw with my own eyes. And after seeing this, my faith in the charkha increased still more. I was not plying the charkha before, but now I have started it. The reason is, if the leaders do not set an example for the nation, how can the people follow them? If Mahatmaji were not plying the charkha himself, the charkha would not have acquired such currency and popularity. Some people say that it is a waste of time to ply the charkha. Their time certainly cannot be more valuable than that of Mahatmaji.

"I marked certain defects in Bengal. There the people are working the charkha but they sell their yarn and buy machine-made cloth. They observed, 'The mill-cloth also is a product of our country.' I told them, 'It is quite right, but the profit of the mill goes to one man. Our object should be that all people should derive benefit through it.'

"I am against big *bhandars*. I venture to suggest that the Congress and the Charkha Sangh should try to make every village, thana and tahsil self-sufficient, so that they may themselves spin and weave and meet their requirements. The people will be all the more benefited by it.

"I entreat you to wear the cloth manufactured in your own land. If we can't do even this much for our country, what else can we do?"

On October 26 the Congress held its session in Bombay, three and a half years after its previous session in Karachi. Nearly 60,000 people had assembled in the Congress Nagar, which was named after Abdul Ghaffar.

By a special resolution, the Congress congratulated the nation on the heroic sacrifices and sufferings undergone by thousands of civil resisters and placed on record its conviction that "without non-violent non-co-operation and civil resistance there would never have been the phenomenal mass awakening that has taken place throughout the country." Whilst recognizing the desirability and the necessity of the suspension of civil resistance, except with reference to Gandhiji, the Congress reiterated its faith in non-violent non-co-operation and civil resistance "as a better means of achieving swaraj than the methods of violence which result in terrorism both by the oppressed and the oppressors."

The important issue before the Congress was a change in its constitution as recommended by Gandhi. He wanted the Congress creed to be changed to "truthful and non-violent" methods in place of "peaceful and legitimate" methods, but the A.-I.C.C. suggested that, first, the amendment be circulated to all the provinces for opinion.

A separate resolution was passed prescribing a khaddar wear: "No member shall be eligible for election to any office or to any Congress committee unless he is a habitual wearer of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar." And for the first time a labour qualification was introduced: "No person shall be eligible to be a candidate for election to the membership of Congress committee unless she or he has performed some manual labour continuously for six months . . ."

On October 28 the Congress adopted the resolution on the formation of the All-India Village Industries Association: "Whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception the progressive identification with the masses, and whereas the village reorganization and reconstruction is one of the items in the constructive programme of the Congress, and whereas such reconstruction, necessarily, implies the revival and the encouragement of dead or dying village industries, besides the central industry of spinning, and whereas this work, like the reorganization of spinning, is possible only through concentrated and special effort, unaffected and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Shri J. C. Kumarappa is hereby authorized to form, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, the All-India Village Industries Association as part of the activities of the Congress. The said association shall work for the revival and encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages."

Speaking on the resolution Abdul Ghaffar said: "Without political freedom, there can be no progress in the country. We are struggling for freedom and shall continue to do so. But since the Congress is a body to serve the whole of India, it is its duty to realize that ninety-eight per cent of the whole population live in the villages. The Congress must think and care for this great bulk of the population living in the villages. It is indeed our duty to go to the villagers to find out their difficulties and troubles. The villagers are starving and are practically naked. Their plight, one has to see to realize. Their children are so timid that if you approach them, they run away. I want to tell you only what I have personally seen in Bengal. Only in those villages where the workers of the Charkha Sangh have reached and where the charkha is being plied, the people get at least one meal a day. I visited their homes and found them clean and tidy. Wherever the charkha is not plying, I found the people starving and hiding in their homes. Through the charkha the people not only get their bread, but also political consciousness. They have got rid of the fear from their hearts. But in places where no constructive work is being done, villagers' condition is miserable. So long as we do not live among them and do not work for their uplift, the attainment of swaraj is not possible. The villagers are ready to do whatever

they are told, but there must be someone to guide them. I will tell you an incident in the Hazaribagh prison. There were many prisoners, but none was permitted to see us. There we had raised a small plot with the help of one or two hard-working convicts. There were some zamindars also. When they saw us cultivating a farm and growing turnips and papayas, their curiosity was aroused. They realized that these were very simple things to do and they could easily support themselves with this. When we were sowing the seeds of water-melon and musk-melon obtained from the Frontier, they came to us and took away the seeds for planting them. Thus, you can see that there is much work to be done. India is an agricultural country. How many cows, goats and buffaloes die here! You see how much profit is earned by others by selling the raw hides that belong to us. The villagers must be taught proper tanning. They must be made aware of the manure from bones, cow-dung, etc. And there are several other things of this kind. Therefore, I second the resolution of Mahatma Gandhi and request you to pass it."

On October 28, the last day of the session, when Gandhi entered the pandal to sever his official connection with the Congress, the entire audience of 80,000 stood up to show their respect to the great leader.

"My interest in the Congress organization," Gandhi stressed, "will henceforth be confined to watching from a distance the enforcement of the principles for which the Congress stands. If we would be truthful through and through, then we shall recognize that the predominant part of the Congress has been progressively social, moral and economic. And it becomes a powerful programme, because it is inevitably connected with the political, that is, attainment of freedom of the country from the foreign yoke, not from the foreign friendship, that is, voluntary intercourse on the terms of absolute equality with the foreign nations. Let me also utter a warning. I hope no one will think that the khaddar clause and the labour franchise do not come into immediate operation. They do. I plead guilty of negligence in that I had not in the past insisted on these things so as to make them a condition precedent to the launching of civil disobedience. My retirement from the Congress may be regarded as a penance for the negligence, although it was wholly unconscious. What I am aiming at is the development of the capacity for civil disobedience. Disobedience that is wholly civil, should never provoke retaliation."

Silent work in the villages was after Abdul Ghaffar's heart and when Gandhi decided to include him on the Executive Committee of the All-India Village Industries Association he had no hesitation in agreeing. He also accepted the membership of the Working Committee of the Congress, but only because of Gandhi's insistence.

Abdul Ghaffar spoke on about six occasions during his ten days' stay in Bombay. "The speeches of the 27th and 29th October are somewhat objectionable and the possibility of a prosecution under section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, is being examined," reported the Bombay Government to the Government of India.

Abdul Ghaffar was invited to speak at a small gathering held on the 27th October under the auspices of the Indian Christian Association, at the Nagpada Neighbourhood House. He spoke in Urdu. The police reporter rendered it in English as follows:

"During the short time at my disposal I want to tell you something about that unfortunate country and about that unfortunate and oppressed community against which propaganda is being carried on not only in India but throughout the world . . . And you must have heard that the Khudai Khidmatgar is a movement, is a body, which came into being in October 1929 in our province. Many of the English papers which you read have been labelling us as the Red Shirts. Government wants to introduce us to the world as Red Shirts . . . We are not Red Shirts, we are Khudai Khidmatgars. At the time this movement was launched, it was a social movement. When we saw that these Pathan brothers of our province were living under the Frontier Regulation Act which was cleverly, craftily and deceitfully made for us into a kind of law by the British Government, as a result of which we always fought against ourselves and there were many murders in our country, and let alone our men, our women had also to go to the courts. We then realized that our people were being ruined. They had no time to sit and ponder over such matters, since all day long, from morning till evening, they were in the courts, fighting and planning to ruin one another. Government introduced this new thing and divided our people, our country, into two parties. At that time our condition was pitiable. We, therefore, thought that it was our duty to save our people from destruction and ruin. At that time we saw that Government did not allow us to do any political work—let alone the political work, take the question of education which is the duty of the government to give to the people. Our unfortunate community wanted the sort of education that Government is giving to you. But it does not want to educate us, it wants to keep us in ignorance. What is our fault? Our fault is this that our province is the gateway of India, and since we live there, the Government calls us the gate-keepers. It openly tells us, 'How can we give reforms to the gate-keepers? If we give anything, India will go out of our hands.' The Britishers regard it as dangerous and think that they will not be able to rule India, if the gate-keepers join hands with the Indians. It was for this very reason that our movement was crushed at the very outset and

it was said, 'This community is savage and consists of robbers.' All the Pathans are not angels. In every community there are good as well as bad people. But I tell you, our community is a majority community and lives there in small groups. The Hindus of the Frontier form five per cent of the population and I assure you that the honour of their women, their lives and their property are safer there than is the case with any other province in the whole of India. We are told, 'There are twenty-five crores of Hindus and if you fight with us and if we go away, then the Hindu Raj will be established here.' On the other hand, you are frightened with these words, 'If we go away from here, the Pathans will descend and swallow you.' I tell you that there is no such danger to you from our unfortunate country and community. In 1932 a Congressman asked me, 'Is it true that the Pathans suck the blood of human beings?' I replied that it was quite true. 'Human blood is very delicious, you have never tasted it.' I tell you this to show that such is the knowledge of a Congressman. All of you, sisters and brothers of India, are quite ignorant of this little province of India, which is your gate-keeper and which is your gate, and it is so for reasons as have been given by me.

"Let alone the Government schools, we started our own schools, but the Government, under some pretext or the other, cleverly ruined the educational institutions of our little children. Let alone the question of Government's duty to educate us, it ruined our own educational institution so that we may always remain under its control. When we saw that we could neither do any political work nor any educational work, we thought of doing some social work, of going to the villages and of starting this Khudai Khidmatgar movement there in order to create love in the hearts of the people for the creatures of God. In our movement, every person who becomes a Khudai Khidmatgar, has to take this oath: 'I regard all the creatures of God, be they Christians, Hindus, Parsis, Sikhs, Germans, Frenchmen or Englishmen, whoever they be, as God's creatures, and I am the servant of those very creatures.' This movement of ours is not confined to the Frontier Province only, nor is it restricted to the Musalmans or to the Hindus, it is a movement for inculcating universal brotherhood. When we train them, we tell them: 'Remember this one principle that you have to be against all tyrants, whoever they may be, whether individuals or nations. You have to help the oppressed, whether the oppressed person happens to be a Musalman or a Hindu or a Christian. You are against the oppressor, whether he be a Musalman, a Hindu, an Englishman or anybody else. Whoever he may be, you will oppose him.' We wish to liberate all those who are poor and all those who are oppressed, from the clutches of the tyrannical persons. I will tell you what it is. It is religion; this very thing is true religion. I am at

least acquainted with the Christian religion, because I was educated at the Edwardes Church Mission High School. I was influenced by it to such an extent that today I am serving my country and community. The headmaster of that school was the son of a well-known nobleman of London. I was very much influenced by him, a young man, who had given up all his enjoyments and comforts in London and had come here in India to serve the Indians although they did not belong to his nationality. He charged no money, nor accepted any remuneration for his work. His expenses were borne by his father. I want you to realize why Christ came into this world. He came for the poor. What was the situation at that time? The government then in power used to oppress the poor very much. Christ came in order to release them from the clutches of the tyrants. Read the Old Testament and you will find that Moses also came for the same purpose. When he went to Pharaoh, the first thing Moses said to him was, 'Liberate all the Israelites whom you have enslaved.'

"I want to tell you that our movement was a religious and social movement. We wanted to do the same work which all the religions of the world—Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and others—and all those reformers who came to preach them wanted to do. We wanted to serve the creatures of God. When our movement was started, Government regarded it as a joke. Whenever we went into the villages, we used to tell the people not to fight among themselves, not to tell lies, not to steal, and not to become spies, and not to help others by neglecting their own brethren. When four months elapsed after the inception of our movement, which was the movement of truth, Government became uneasy and it sent a person to us inquiring what we were doing in the villages. We replied, 'We want to stop the creatures of God from fighting among themselves.' We also asked: 'Why has the British Government which claims to be a divine government and a divine nation, kept the police? If the claim is true, then you should also help us.' But this is a mere farce. The police is there to use the lathis, to write diaries against us, to send us to jails. We know what is the duty of Government and what it is doing. We said that there was none to check it. We said that we wanted to bring about social reform and organize the Pathan community. Once they agreed with us that we wanted social reform. But they afterwards said, 'If today you organize the Pathans, then where is the guarantee that you will not use them against the British Government?' This is what was in their mind. Our hearts were pure, but there was guilt in their hearts. When they said this to us, we replied: 'What security can we give to you? The guarantee of a nation is its trust. You trust us and we shall trust you.'

"We were born in the Frontier Province and this is why we were doomed. This is our great crime that we wanted to see the people of the villages civilized in that very Frontier Province which is called the gateway of India, while they wanted that these people should go on fighting among themselves and remain in need of them and remain in a ruined and destroyed condition so that they might rule our country without feeling any anxiety. Government did not accept what we said. And how could they accept? This happened four months after, on the 29th April 1930, on the second day of the first meeting of the Khudai Khidmatgars, when we and all our workers were arrested and sent to jail. I tell you that the creed of the present social reform movement was based on non-violence. We used to teach the Khudai Khidmatgars to work in peace and with patience, to put up with all the troubles and difficulties they had to face, peacefully, patiently, and we used to administer an oath to them about these things. Upto that time we were not in the Congress. Our movement was purely social and religious. When we were arrested, the people of Peshawar wanted to make a demonstration. Government wanted to maintain its prestige. It wanted to crush the spirit created in the people by the movement which we had carried on for a short period. The Deputy-Commissioner came to Peshawar and telephoned to the Inspector-General of Police saying, 'There is no need for you to come here. Those who were arrested, have been sent to jail, and those who had formed the procession, have gone away.' Nothwithstanding this the armoury and guns reached the Kissa Khani Bazar of Peshawar. Then the Indian army was first ordered to open fire. They refused, saying: 'What have they got? They have neither lathis nor stones. On whom should we fire?' They were thereupon removed from that place, court-martialled and sent to jail. Even today many of them are lying in jail. Then the British soldiers were brought and they fired, and in a minute 200 to 250 persons were martyred. Had we committed any offence for which our blood was shed in the Kissa Khani Bazar? No. The British wanted to establish their prestige. We know that prestige cannot be established among the Pathans by means of bullets, but it can be established by words of love. They did not know this, but when they came to know of it, they realized that this community could not be put down by anybody. You can conquer the Pathan community by words of love, but you cannot conquer it through violence. Now, the British Government has got some experience of the same. Now, they do not allow me even in the Punjab. I am greatly astounded when I hear my Indian brethren say that Government is employing terrorism in Bengal because there is violence there, but I now ask you, why then is terrorism employed in the Frontier Province? Our volunteers are absolutely non-violent. After

coming out of the jail, I have everywhere challenged Government to produce even one instance of violence, but it has not done so. It wants to crush the spirit of a nation. At various places in our country they have fired bullets, ruined and looted the houses of the people, entered the houses and broken into pieces all the utensils used for drinking tea and eating food. They used to put phenyl in the flour-pots of the people. The greater the violence shown by Government, the greater was the increase in our national spirit. When the first meeting of Khudai Khidmatgars was held in April, Government started repression throughout the province. Within three months, we had forty thousand volunteers.

"I want to tell you how this movement, which was originally a social movement, assumed a political colour. If anybody has made it political, it is Government. When it exercised terrorism on us, we became helpless. We went to the Muslim League, the Muslim Conference, and we went to the Musalmans of Lahore, Simla and Delhi, requesting them to help us. But they were not ready to help us. Thereafter, when I was in jail, our brethren complained that the Musalmans of India did not help them and inquired whether there was any other body which would be willing to save them from ruin and destruction, and whether its help could be available. You know that for a man drowning in the sea even the support of a straw is very great. The Congress told us, 'We are with you, we shall help you.' Then, we said, 'We, too, are with you.' It obliged us and turned our position into a political one. This was done by Government. What answer has Government to give, if any? When we got the support of the Congress, a committee known as Patel Committee was formed. But Vithalbhai Patel was not allowed to go to the Frontier Province. When he halted at Rawalpindi, people secretly approached him, and the report which he prepared and published was immediately confiscated by Government. When people got help to avenge the persons killed in the Kissa Khani Bazar, and when Government saw that, on the one hand, the Afridis had got ready to fight with it, while on the other, the Congress had started its propaganda by joining us, then it changed its policy and came to us inquiring as to what we wanted. We said: 'The time of stating our wants has passed away. We told you that ours was a social movement. Now we do not want to give it up. You can do whatever you like.'

"It has always been the policy of this Government to regard the Frontier Province as the gateway of India and to keep the gate-keeper aloof from the rest of India. Then, at the time, when we joined the Congress, they began to feel and realized what had happened. They wanted to crush this nation, but it has become a source of danger for them. The religious movement has now become a political movement.

Then some government agents came to us and said, 'We are prepared to concede whatever you want.' But there was a condition attached to it and it was that we should give up the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi. We said: 'We cannot give up the Congress. The Pathans are not an ungrateful people. We shall never desert any one who does us a good turn.' After this, truce was announced. The Chief Commissioner of the Frontier Province wrote to Irwin: 'Two men cannot live here, only one of the two can live here. Either I or Abdul Ghaffar will stay here.' Lord Irwin was a noble man. He had love for humanity. On the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Irwin released us. And when we were released, we were not released to do our work. Lord Irwin used to receive false police reports every day, which he used to send to Mahatma Gandhi. They wanted to terrorize us. They wanted that the Pathans of Kohat, Bannu and Hazara might not get awakened like the Pathans of the Frontier Province. They wanted that the whole province might not become awakened. Mahatma Gandhi again came to our help. Mahatma Gandhi said, 'If you re-arrest these men, then there will be no truce between us any longer.' Among the Englishmen there was one man in the army who knew Pakhtu very well. He used to go there before and used to say: 'Such and such a leader has come. You should not go to him. Tell him to go away from your village.' But he did not know that he was doing propaganda on our behalf. Why was it so? It was so, because our movement was one of truthfulness. It was a religious movement. I say even now that today Khuda, Paramatma, has shown mercy to us and has awakened our people. A spirit has been created in our little children. This is not our doing, but this is the result of God's mercy. Whatever has been done, has been done by Him. Brothers, you see our little children. Whenever they see any Englishman going in a motor-car, they say, 'You are still here!' That this is our country is understood by our little children. But I want to tell you this that the spirit which has been created has been created by sacrificing all the 513 villages. If there is any spirit in the Frontier today, then this is due to the fact that the Frontier Province has made so many sacrifices which no other province has made. The Government wanted to stop our work, but somehow or other, we carried it on. There was no village to which we have not gone and explained matters to our brethren and pointed out the right path to them.

"A Khudai Khidmatgar bears no enmity towards anyone. When we were arrested in 1932, the population of that place was twenty-six lakhs, out of which there were three lakhs of Khudai Khidmatgars. After this the Pathans came to know that there was no truce with them there, for even during the time of truce, they were being terrorized. Section 144

was in force everywhere—in the districts, in the tahsils, on the roads. Meetings could not be held within four miles on this side of the road and within four miles on that side of the road. I want to tell you that whatever treatment was given to us, we had records of it with us. Attempts were made to make the Hindus and the Musalmans fight with each other. Government came to know that Mahatma Gandhi was coming and they also came to know that I was also going to meet him—they must have learnt that all the documents were with me. I was ill, I was lying at Peshawar. I had a mind to go by the Frontier Mail the next morning, but the police arrived at night and arrested us and took us from there to Hazaribagh in a special train. That very night, they also arrested all our co-workers and sentenced every one of them to three years' imprisonment.

"I simply heard later about the affairs of that place. I tell you myself that no revenue is due to Government from me, yet you can imagine as to what was their object in looting my house and taking away all our things. The reason why they looted our homes was also with a view to maintain their prestige. They wanted to show thereby, 'What are you and what are your leaders? Government can loot your houses, arrest your leaders and humiliate them.' I have no complaint to make against Government, because Government will do what it thinks proper.

"Today, the whole of their empire is being run on the strength of India. If India does not remain in their hands, how can the empire remain? It will employ various sorts of tricks and oppressions in order to enslave India. We have no complaint to make against it. I say that it is welcome to do what it likes. But we have a great grievance against our brethren, which we want to redress. If those brethren of ours do not understand it, what can we tell them? We shall tell them in terms of love and pray to God to grant understanding to these brothers of ours."

On the last day of his stay in Bombay, October 29, Abdul Ghaffar addressed about a hundred members of the Gandhi Seva Sena and the Women's Unity Club. He praised the sacrifices made by the women in the cause of the country. He complimented Khurshedbehn Naoroji of Bombay for the admirable work done by her among the Frontier women. She went to jail twice for their sake. He was, indeed, glad to find that the women were now awakened to their sense of duty. If the women of India were awakened, it was not possible for any power on earth to keep India in slavery.

On Trial

1934

At Wardha the Khan brothers felt perfectly at home and participated in the ashram activities. "The Khan brothers are here and I am having very nice time with them," noted Gandhi. "To be with them more, is to love them more. They are so nice, so simple, and yet so penetrative. They do not beat about the bush."

Dr. Khan Sahib took upon himself the task of treating and nursing the patients in Jamnalal Bajaj's household, which was ever widening with the numerous visitors and workers coming to Wardha to meet Gandhi. Also he went out to nearby villages on a medical and sanitary mission, tramping ten to fifteen miles a day. On an early morning he would go to the ashram to join Gandhi in his walks. He would follow him unobtrusively without even exchanging one word and walk back home after a visit to the ashram patients.

Abdul Ghaffar joined Gandhi in his prayers and walks, every morning and evening. He also joined in the Tulsi Ramayan reading that Gandhi had every morning. "The music of that *bhajan* fills my soul," he once said to Pyarelal, "please, put the words down in the Urdu script and give me an Urdu translation of it." Essentially of a retiring disposition, he liked nothing so much as quiet prayer and silent work, and it was for both these objects that he had decided to bury himself in the villages of Bengal. He had an ocular demonstration of the potency of khaddar when he visited the poor Muslim peasants in Bengal in their humble cottages a couple of months ago, and he now wanted to carry the message of revival of village industries to them. He held long talks with Gandhi and chalked out a programme of work in Bengal, with a view to staying there so long as he could not enter his own province. He visited some of the villages in the vicinity of Wardha to study the villagers' condition.

After walking through the village of Nagjhari on November 18th, Abdul Ghaffar addressed a meeting. He said he was glad to visit Nagjhari but he was sad at recollecting the history of the volunteers of the village of whom some forty were imprisoned during the struggle. He found the condition of villagers bad, their clothes were in tatters, they could not get enough to eat, they had neither hospitals nor schools, and the condition of their huts was such that even the donkeys and dogs of Europe would not live in them. India used to be called the golden

land but its people were becoming beggars because of slavery, and that so long as there was no swaraj, they could not be happy; and if they were united among themselves, observed non-violence and followed the Congress programme, then they would win swaraj.

The following day he addressed about a thousand villagers at Mauza Deoli. After expressing his pleasure at seeing them, he regretted that no women were present. He likened men and women to the wheels of a cart. Without two wheels no cart could move, so no country without the two wheels of men and women could attain swaraj. He then taunted villagers for being afraid of the police and remarked that the Europeans were only a few, and if the Indians did not help them, they could not remain in India. He exhorted his audience to follow the teachings of religion and fear God only and they need not be afraid of the police or the military or any other power in the world.

In the last week of November Abdul Ghaffar paid a short visit to the United Provinces. Addressing a large meeting at Mathura on November 27, he said that he was not anxious to deliver speeches in the cities but wanted to serve the villages, where people lived in miserable conditions. He did not belong to any particular province but was a servant of God and was anxious to serve everybody.

On the same day he arrived by motor-car at Aligarh. Owing to receptions on the way, he was late by two hours. He was taken in a procession through the streets of Aligarh and the crowds swelled to several thousands in the vicinity of the Lyall Library, where he was to address the citizens. There was a huge crowd of the university students also. Abdul Ghaffar amidst deafening cheers rose to speak. He warmly thanked the citizens of Aligarh for having given him such a rousing reception and for the love and affection they had shown for him. But the time for such processions and meetings had long passed, now it was time for everybody to do some practical work, in which lay his true happiness. He stressed that over ninety per cent of the Indian population resided in villages and they were in a state of abject poverty. It was the duty of every Hindu and Muslim living in cities and towns to help the villagers. If they really bore the love they had shown that evening, they should work the Congress programme of village uplift.

He observed that the main cause of the degradation of the country was the love of slavery, and as such neither the Hindus nor the Muslims could boast of having any religion or culture. They should, therefore, join hands to wipe off their sense of slavery, which was eating into their vitals. Referring to the distrust prevailing among Hindus and Muslims against one another he pointed out that it was nothing but propaganda which always wanted to keep India under subjection. They should all

have a sincere faith in God. They should consider themselves to be Khudai Khidmatgars, to serve humanity honestly, faithfully and fearlessly. India's freedom should be the only object of all, and in India's freedom alone lay their prosperity.

Addressing the Musalmans he said that Islam came for freedom but he was sorry to see them stepping back and forgetting their own religion. Even if the Hindus should abandon their fight for freedom, the Musalmans should not, as enjoined by their religion.

Referring to his own province, he said that although they were only twenty-six lakhs, yet they were fully determined not only to secure freedom for themselves but to free the whole of India. He was glad that the present movement had brought them in closer touch with the rest of India. The Frontier always remained non-violent, but the ordinance rule had been going on there. He exhorted the audience that they should sink their differences and follow him in the fight for freedom.

On December 4th he went back to Wardha, accompanied by his twelve-year-old son, Abdul Ali. His fourteen-year-old daughter, Mehar Taj, had just returned from England with Mirabehn to join the Kanya Ashram, a girls' institute at Wardha. If a Pathan girl could be sent out for education to England, why should she find any difficulty in making the Kanya Ashram her own, he thought. The simplicity of life, the atmosphere of peace, purity and freedom, and the insistence on manual labour in the institute appealed to him and he was keen on getting his daughter trained there. He entrusted her to the care of Mirabehn.

Wardha was now like a second home to him. His daughter, Mehar Taj, and his sons—Ghani, Wali and Ali, were all together with their loving father after a lapse of three years.

After exactly one hundred days of freedom, he was arrested on the December 7th, at five in the evening, when the District Superintendent of Police of Wardha, accompanied by a police officer from Bombay, visited the Satyagraha Ashram asking for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He was sitting upstairs with Gandhi and the arrival of the visitors was announced by Mirabehn. Gandhi asked her to bring them upstairs. The Superintendent of Police went upstairs and told Gandhi that he had a warrant of arrest for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan from the Presidency Magistrate of Bombay. Gandhi asked for the warrant and read it out to Abdul Ghaffar. It was on a charge under section 124-A. On the police officer asking Abdul Ghaffar as to when he would be ready, he said he was quite ready. But Gandhi said that if the officer did not mind, Khan Saheb would see his brother and children at Jamnalal's place. Gandhi and the inmates of the ashram accompanied Abdul Ghaffar upto the police van. Within a few minutes, he was driven to Jamnalal's house.

Mahadev Desai who was a witness to Abdul Ghaffar's arrest and who wrote a short character-sketch, *Two Servants of God*, based on his talks with the Khan brothers, observes:

"But the father had no tears to mix with the children's tears. He knew that he had been blessed with a friendship which would grow with increasing tests and trials and would never diminish—the friendship with Gandhiji and Jamnalalji to whom he could entrust his children without the slightest anxiety. He was to have left for Bengal on the 9th December, but Jamnalalji insisted on his staying for the first meeting of the Board of the Village Industries Association, and so his departure was put off until the 15th. We were really thinking and talking of his work in Bengal when the District Superintendent of Police came on the evening of the 7th with a warrant of arrest for him. Always prepared for such summons, the great Pathan said he was ready the very minute the warrant came. But he was allowed some time to meet his friends, brother and children. As he was preparing to go, Gandhiji said, 'Well, Khan Saheb, this time we are going to offer defence unlike previous occasions.' Khan Saheb was rather taken aback. He said he was loath to take a course different from the one he had been taking since 1919. 'I see your feeling in the matter,' said Gandhiji, 'but this is not the occasion. We do not want to go to jail, if we can help it.' And straight came the reply, 'Just as you wish, then.'

"It was a wrench to the older brother to be torn away from a brother who had shared his joys and sorrows for over three years in jail and during the hundred days of their restricted freedom. But the younger had no sorrow on his personal account. He asked the little children to be brave and to learn the lesson of simplicity and self-discipline under the kind care of their adopted parents, Gandhiji and Jamnalalji.

"But one sorrow seemed to cast a faint shadow over his face. 'How I wish I had been able to fulfil my promise to the poor Musalmans in the Bengal villages! I had promised to live and work among them, and I may not now do even that little service.' And, pausing awhile, he said in accents of deep pathos: 'As regards the Frontier, I do not know what to say. Let my arrest not provoke my people into acts of rashness. Let them take it calmly and with cool courage, sit down to the quiet work of ending their internal dissensions and uniting themselves. I am grieved that, while all sorts of aspersions are cast on us, we are allowed no opportunity to prove that they are wrong. A government report describes my province as a "murderous province". But what opportunity have they given us for even the non-political work of education and social reform among the simple, ignorant Pathans?'

"But, as the moment for departure for Bombay approached, even

this sorrow had disappeared from the mind of this true servant of God. 'I am quite certain,' he said to Jamnalalji and his good wife, Janakidevi, as he took leave of them, 'that it is all God's doing; He kept me out just for the time He wanted to use me outside. Now it is His will that I must serve from inside. What pleases Him, pleases me.' "

"Though I had always longed for it," Gandhi wrote in a foreword to Mahadev Desai's book, "I was never able to be with Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan for any length of time before the closing months of last year. Good fortune, however, brought me not only the younger brother but also the elder, Dr. Khan Sahib, very soon after their discharge from the Hazaribagh prison. As luck would have it, they were under orders not to enter the Frontier Province till 28th December 1934. They were under discipline not to offer civil disobedience. And so they accepted the hospitality of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj in Wardha. I was thus privileged to come in intimate touch with the brothers. The more I knew them, the more attracted I felt towards them. I was struck by their transparent sincerity and frankness and utmost simplicity. I observed, too, that they had come to believe in truth and non-violence, not as a policy but as a creed. The younger brother, I found, was consumed with deep religious fervour. His was not a narrow creed. I found him to be a universalist. His politics, if he had any, were derived from his religion. The doctor had no politics. This privileged contact led me to the conclusion that the brothers were much misunderstood. I, therefore, asked Mahadev Desai to note all he could from them of their lives and prepare for the public a sketch introducing them as men."

In a public statement dated December 11, 1934 Gandhi referred to his contemplated visit to the Frontier Province: "I have no desire to offer civil disobedience at the present moment. My object is, as a humble servant of God, to meet those in the Frontier who call themselves servants of God and to know them. The urge has become all the greater now that their brave leader is under arrest. But my immediate object cannot be served by defiance of authority. Therefore, I propose to try all possible constitutional means to obtain the necessary permission."

C. F. Andrews had two interviews with Mr. Hallett, the Home Secretary, in connection with Gandhi's contemplated visit to the Frontier Province. The Home Secretary explained "the danger involved" in Gandhi's visit to the Frontier. "Whatever his motives, the visit might be misrepresented and it would only result in the revival of the movement and the spirit of violence."

Andrews then pointed out that Gandhi felt a responsibility for Abdul Ghaffar—he was the leader and out of loyalty to his followers who had suffered and gone to jail in his cause, he was bound by that feeling of

loyalty. He had asked Gandhi why he accepted the Frontier movement so quickly and with so little inquiry. Gandhi had told him that he had made inquiry and he was quite convinced also by Abdul Ghaffar himself. Andrews then explained his own position. When Gandhi had first made the suggestion some months ago, he at once said no. Why should he discard the village scheme and go to the Frontier? Gandhi said that the idea had come into his head. Gandhi was stubborn. His object in wishing to visit the Frontier Province was to be with its people, know them at first hand and to understand how far the teachings of non-violence by Abdul Ghaffar had permeated his followers. It was also his intention to help them in the development of their village industries.

Mr. Hallett categorically told Andrews that Gandhi's visit to the Frontier Province was "not only inadvisable but would be a tragedy". Andrews went on to refer to the influence which Abdul Ghaffar had on Gandhi and said that he himself had formed a very favourable opinion of him. The Home Secretary pointed out that his recent speeches, for one of which he was being prosecuted, were instinct with racial hatred and on the same lines as those of 1931 and added that Abdul Ghaffar was a fanatic or an honest fanatic, whose fanaticism got the better of him. Andrews suggested that it was possible that Abdul Ghaffar did not realize that his actions or his speeches were a breach of the principle of non-violence.

On the eve of Abdul Ghaffar's trial Gandhi wrote the following letter to Vallabhbhai Patel: "I send you a new statement for Khan Saheb. I think it is the proper thing to do and it should be done. I am writing a letter to him. You can go through it so that I do not have to write anything further. I consider the expression of regret in it to be very important. But the final decision must be yours, both about this as well as the whole statement. I cannot say anything definite at this distance. I also feel that a lawyer should be engaged. He should read out the statement. He should not plead guilty or not guilty. The lawyer is not to ask for any reduction in the sentence. He should only analyse the speech if necessary or else just 'watch'. There is no question of cross-examining witnesses. These are only my suggestions; you may accept or reject them as you think fit."

On December 13, 1934 Abdul Ghaffar was produced before H. P. Dastur, Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay. He was escorted into court and on his appearance the whole audience stood up and clapped their hands. He bowed to them and took his seat behind his counsel, Bhulabhai Desai. Mr. G. L. Walker, Public Prosecutor, addressing the court said that he did not propose to read the speech at this stage but would first refer to the section under which Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

was charged. He contended that the speech delivered by the accused on October 27 tended to cause disaffection and bring the Government into hatred and contempt. The charge would, therefore, fall within the principal section 124-A and not under the three explanations mentioned in the section.

Mr. Bhulabhai Desai declined to cross-examine the witness, who had said that the speech was delivered at Nagpada Neighbourhood House in Bombay, where about 250 persons were present, chiefly composed of Indian Christians.

The Magistrate then read out the charge to the accused and asked him whether he pleaded guilty or not guilty to the charge.

Abdul Ghaffar: I do not plead to the charge.

Magistrate: Then you plead "not guilty".

Abdul Ghaffar: No, I am not pleading to the charge.

Magistrate: You refuse to plead guilty to the charge?

Bhulabhai Desai: Your Worship sees that an accused person may either plead guilty, not guilty or, in the words of the section, "I do not plead to the charge." And the accused's plea, therefore, falls under the third alternative.

Mr. Walker: If he does not plead, is he entitled to be represented?

Bhulabhai Desai: Certainly!

The Magistrate recorded the plea as made by the accused and then asked the accused whether the translation of the speech was correct.

"I cannot say, as I am not pleading to the charge," replied Abdul Ghaffar. His written statement read as follows:

"I have read the charge-sheet and the translation of my Hindustani speech attached to it. Whilst the general trend of the translation admits of much improvement, I admit the correctness of the main statements in my speech, which, my lawyer friends advise me, are capable of bringing it within the clauses of the section under which I am charged.

"I am a loyal Congressman and have accepted its policy of not seeking arrest and imprisonment at the present moment.

"I had, therefore, no desire whatsoever to utter words of sedition. I am, therefore, sorry that I made the statements in the speech, however unwittingly, which are open to exception from the prosecution point of view.

"At the same time I would like to state that in describing the movement of the Khudai Khidmatgars, which I did at the instance of my Christian friends who had invited me to speak to them, I felt bound to state what I believed was the truth about the movement. I could have no intention of wounding anybody's susceptibilities.

"This might, perhaps, be inferred from the tribute paid to the English

schoolmaster of my school days. My speech read as a whole will, I hope, leave no doubt on the court's mind that my purpose was to emphasize the innocent character of the movement rather than to frame an indictment against Government."

Mr. Walker then addressing the Magistrate observed that the speech delivered by the accused attributed the "basest and lowest" motives to Government and fell within the provisions of the main section. He then proceeded to read the speech and commented on the paragraphs on which the prosecution relied. He submitted that it was a "dangerously and highly seditious speech" and should be dealt with as such.

The Magistrate then reserved passing orders and adjourned the case to Saturday, 11.30 a.m., December 15.

Mr. Walker, Public Prosecutor, appeared on behalf of the Crown. Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai with Mr. K. M. Munshi and Mr. C. Kanuga represented the accused.

Before Abdul Ghaffar left the court several members of the bar and Congress leaders present in court warmly shook hands with him.

On December 15 Mr. Dastur, Chief Presidency Magistrate, sentenced Abdul Ghaffar to two years' rigorous imprisonment. In the course of the judgement, he said:

"Though the accused refuses to plead to the charge in the written statement put in by him, his plea seems to be that he had no desire to utter words of sedition and that certain statements were made by him unwittingly. Under the circumstances, I fail, indeed, to understand why the learned counsel for the accused objected to my recording a plea of not guilty.

"There was no attempt made to cross-examine any of the witnesses, and the correctness of the shorthand notes or of the translation was not impugned in any way. In his written statement the accused says that whilst the general trend of the translation admits of much improvement, he admits the correctness of the main statements in his speech, which his lawyer friends advise him are capable of bringing him within the section of the Indian Penal Code under which he is charged. He has no desire to utter words of sedition and he is sorry that he made the statements in the speech, however unwittingly, which are open to exception from the prosecution point of view. At the same time, he says that in describing the movement of Khudai Khidmatgars he felt bound to state what he believed was the truth about the movement. His speech read as a whole will show that his purpose was to emphasize the innocent character of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement rather than to frame an indictment against the Government.

"The essence of the crime of sedition consists in the intention of the

party making the speech or publishing the writing. As the accused says that he did not intend to frame an indictment against the Government and that some of the statements made by him, which his lawyer friends advise him as falling within the section, were unwittingly uttered by him, it is necessary to read the speech as a whole. Intention must primarily be judged by the language. When a man is charged in respect of anything he has written or said, the meaning of what he said or wrote must be taken to be his meaning and that meaning is what his language would be understood to mean by the people to whom it was addressed.

"If the meaning of his words amounts to bringing into contempt or hatred or to an attempt on his part to bring into hatred or contempt the Government established by law in British India, the words would fall under the meaning of 'sedition' as defined in section 124-A. But comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain redress or alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred or contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under the section. Comments expressing disapprobation of the administrative or other action of the Government without attempting to excite contempt, hatred or disaffection are also protected.

"But where it is ascertained that the intention of the speaker was to excite or to attempt to excite feelings of hatred and contempt for or disaffection towards the Government, it is immaterial whether the words be true or false, or whether they did in fact excite feelings of hatred and contempt or disaffection.

"As a matter of common sense a man is presumed to intend the natural and ordinary consequences of his act. He cannot, speaking generally, say: 'Although this language would have the natural and ordinary effect of exciting feelings of disaffection, I did not, when uttering it, intend to do so.' One can form a pretty accurate notion of what a man is driving at or what he wants to convey, from a perusal of the writing or speech.

"At the same time the speech must be read as a whole in a fair, free, liberal spirit. In dealing with it one should not pause on an objectionable sentence here or a strong word there. They should be dealt with in a spirit of freedom and not viewed with an eye of narrow criticism.

"The above principles have been laid down by the High Courts in several cases as guides to arriving at decision as to whether the speech or writing complained of is seditious or not.

"The speech is a long speech, extending over thirteen typed pages. He tells the hearers how the movement originated and in what year it was started and how it grew and extended its activities. It was a social

movement at first. It came into existence when the Frontier Regulation Act was drafted. He says: 'The act was cleverly, craftily and deceitfully made for us into a kind of law by the British Government, as a result of which we always fought amongst ourselves and there were many murders in our country, and let alone our men, our women had to go to the law courts. The Frontier Act was so cleverly drafted that all the ladies were affected by it and we then realized it that our people were being ruined. Government introduced this new thing and divided our people and our country into two parties.'

"The speaker clearly suggests that the Frontier Act was a cunning and crafty piece of legislation passed by the Government with a base motive, namely, to divide the people into two parties, to foment litigation, to plan their ruin, and even attributes that it was owing to this that murders flourished in their country.

"A little further down he tells the hearers that the Government whose duty it is to give education to the people of India, did not want to educate the Frontier people. It wanted to keep them in ignorance in order that they may not join hands with the Indians and unite with India. Though it imputes a certain amount of dereliction of duty on the part of the Government and imputes a selfish motive to them, I do not think that this passage by itself can be considered as seditious. It is only cited by me with a view to show what his attitude towards the Government is and how ready he is to impute motives to them.

"The same base motive is attributed to the Government when he says: 'Let alone Government schools; we started our own schools, but the Government, under some pretext or the other, cleverly ruined the educational institutions of our little children. Let alone the question of Government's duty to educate us, it ruined our own educational institution so that we may always remain under its control.'

"At page 6 he speaks of the police kept by the Government. 'Why has the British Government,' he asks, 'kept the police? We know and you also know that it (the police) is there to use lathis, to write diaries (to report against us), to send us to jails.'

"This would clearly fall within the section. The meaning is that the police force is maintained by the Government not for the preservation of peace and order, but for beating the people, making false and secret reports against them and sending them to jail. This is nothing but a deliberate perversion of facts and the object of it can only be to bring the Government into contempt and hatred.

"He then contrasts what the Khudai Khidmatgars wanted to do with what the Government actually did. 'We wanted,' he says, 'to see the people of the villages civilized in the very Frontier Province which is

called the Gate of India, while they wanted that these people should go on fighting among themselves and remain in need of them and remain in a ruined and destroyed condition so that they might rule over our country without feeling any anxiety.'

"To impute to Government that they want the people 'to fight among themselves' and 'to remain in a ruined and destroyed condition' is not only a seditious statement but a dishonest one, too.

"What follows is worse. The speaker described the length to which the Government will go in order to preserve its prestige. He says: 'I have told you that the Government wanted to maintain its prestige, and at the same time, wanted to crush the spirit which had been created in the Pathan community. Notwithstanding this, (namely, the dispersal of persons who had formed some procession), the armoury and guns reached Kissa Khani Bazar of Peshawar. Then the Indian army was first ordered to open fire. They refused, saying: 'What have they got? They have neither lathis nor stones. On whom should we fire? Then they were, therefore, removed from that place. Afterwards, they were court-martialled and sent to jail. Then the British soldiers were brought after this and they fired and, in a minute or two, 200 to 250 persons were martyred. Had we committed any offence for which our blood was shed in the Kissa Khani Bazar? No, it was for the sake of prestige. The Britishers wanted to establish the prestige.'

"The passage amounts to a very serious charge against the Government, namely, that for the sake of prestige it will not hesitate to butcher or kill in cold blood 200 to 250 innocent persons, for no fault of theirs and for no offence on their part. The example of the Indian regiment refusing to open fire on people who had done nothing and their alleged punishment for this act, is purposely brought out in contrast to what the British regiment is supposed to have done. The passage is bound to excite the feelings of hatred and contempt for such a government. It would undoubtedly create resentment and disaffection in the minds of his hearers towards a government which is alleged to have resorted to such acts of savagery and violence, amounting to cold-blooded slaughter of 250 innocent men, only for the sake of prestige.

"The accused then dwells on the terrorism employed in the Frontier: 'Our volunteers are absolutely non-violent. Government cannot produce even a single instance of violence. After coming out of jail I have everywhere challenged Government to produce even one instance of violence, but it has not done so. All this is farce. It wants to crush the spirit of the nation. I ask you to see that in various places of the country they have fired bullets, ruined and looted the houses of the people, entered the houses and broke into pieces all the utensils used for drinking

tea and for eating food. They used to put phenyle in the flour-pots of the people, of the poor people. We do not express our surprise at the taking away of the utensils. Let the policemen take them. They will be useful to them.'

"This again is a very serious charge to make and impute violence, brutality, cruelty and base motive to the Government in order that they may crush the spirit of the nation.

"The accused then tells his hearers that it was due to the repression of the Government that the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, which was originally a social movement, assumed a political colour. They did not make it political, but it was Government when it exercised terrorism on them, they became helpless. These words amount to levelling the charge of repression and terrorism against the Government.

"Further down he says: 'During the time of truce they, the Pathans, were being terrorized . . . Attempts were made to make the Hindus and the Muslims fight with each other. The Government came to know that Mahatma Gandhi was coming and they also came to know that I was also going to meet him . . . That very night the police arrested us . . . They arrested all persons who were our co-workers and sentenced every one of them to three years' imprisonment. I tell you myself that no revenue is due to Government from me, yet you can imagine as to what was their object in looting my house and taking away all our things. The reason why they looted our houses was also with a view to maintain their prestige. They wanted to show thereby: "What are you and what are your leaders? Government can loot your houses, it can arrest your leaders and humiliate them." '

"In the above passage the speaker again attributes base motive to the Government and suggests that it is the Government that makes Hindus and Muslims fight with each other, and that it is prepared to loot the houses merely for the sake of prestige and to humiliate the leaders.

"All these passages quoted by me are such that they are bound to excite feelings of contempt and hatred for the Government and I don't understand what the accused means when he says that he had no desire to utter words of sedition and that he made the statements unwittingly.

"From the passages quoted by me, it cannot be said that the accused only uttered a few words here and there and that he said them unwittingly. These are lengthy quotations and they deliberately impute base and sinister motives to Government.

"He attributes to Government, cunning, fraud and deceit. According to him it is the Government that makes the Hindus and Muslims fight with each other. Government is accused of acts of repression and terrorism to crush the spirit of the nation. He deliberately charges them with

murdering innocent men in order to maintain its prestige. He accuses Government of firing bullets, looting the houses and pouring phenyle in the flour-pots of the poor people and breaking their pots and pans. He characterizes the maintenance of the police force by Government as an organization for sending innocent people to jail on secret reports made by the police and for using them to assault the people with lathis.

"I, therefore, hold the accused guilty under section 124-A. The accusations made by him are deliberate and grave, serious and reckless. The accused is a man of great influence and his words would have a greater effect than that of an ordinary person. I, therefore, sentence him to two years' rigorous imprisonment."

"I was not guilty of any sedition," observes Abdul Ghaffar, "because how could I indulge in sedition in a meeting of Christians who were of the same faith as Englishmen! My real sedition was that in my heart lay sympathy for the downtrodden Bengal Muslims whom I loved and for whose service and amelioration my heart yearned. I was arrested solely for this sin. The Government knew that I was to reach Bengal by about the 8th of December. It could not tolerate the idea of my work among the Muslims of Bengal."

Bhulabhai Desai in his speech in the Central Assembly demanding Abdul Ghaffar's release revealed: "The first question after his arrest that he asked me as counsel was, 'If truth can be a defence to the charge, I am quite prepared to stand the trial and prove every single statement that is made in that speech.' And, indeed, it amazed an honest Pathan to be told that he could not, that he might bring the Government into contempt and ridicule even if he told the barest truth. For, indeed, the very basis of that section appears to be that the Government must be deemed to be ideal. And if the truth be such that it turns out that the Government is anything but ideal, he is guilty under section 124-A."

Brotherhood of Congress

1934–6

On December 15, 1934 Abdul Ghaffar was sent to His Majesty's House of Correction at Byculla in Bombay. When he was transferred to the Sabarmati Central Prison on December 29 his weight had gone down from 168 lb. to 161 lb. On January 13, 1935 it went down to 155 lb. He was an indoor patient from January 27 to February 2. He complained of loss of appetite and that the style of cooking and the climate in the presidency did not suit him. On March 25, 1935 he weighed 149 lb.

"While his health is not yet seriously affected," informed the Home Secretary, Mr. Hallett, to the Chief Secretaries to the Government of the United Provinces and the Central Provinces, "it is likely to deteriorate. For propaganda purposes the most would be made of this loss of weight and accusations would be put forward charging Government with deliberately confining a national hero in a jail where the climatic and other conditions must inevitably result in the ruin of his health. It is clearly desirable to avoid, if possible, any handle being given for such accusations by transferring him to a jail in some other province with more favourable climatic conditions, more akin to those of his native province. The prisoner himself asked for a transfer to a jail in the North-West Frontier Province or the jail in Gujrat in the Punjab. The local governments were approached in the matter, but there are strong reasons against his transfer to a jail in either of these provinces. In view of these considerations the Government of India will be grateful if the Governor-in-Council can see his way to help them and the Bombay Government out of this difficulty and will agree to accommodate Abdul Ghaffar Khan in one of the jails in U. P. or C. P."

In reply the Government of the Central Provinces said:

"The province has already had the presence of Mr. Gandhi, who has no natural connection with the Central Provinces, thrust upon it for an apparently indefinite period. His residence at Wardha is the haunt of every leading Congressman in India, and if political troubles were to arise, it would at once became a centre of disaffection. Our experience with the Ali brothers and other political prisoners has shown that, even though they are in jail, they tend to become a focus for anti-government elements, and the fact is, to put it bluntly, that the farther Mr. Gandhi's Frontier confrere is kept away from Mr. Gandhi's residence, the better will it be for our peace of mind in the province.

"This Government has always shown itself willing to give whatever assistance it could to the Government of India in disposing of political prisoners, but that both the Gandhis should be housed within its borders seems to it to be not only undesirable on general grounds but also an undue tax upon its hospitality."

The Government of the United Provinces agreed to accommodate Abdul Ghaffar Khan "with considerable difficulty and reluctance" in the Bareilly District Jail.

In a letter dated May 29, 1935 Vallabhbhai Patel wrote to Sir Henry Craik, Home Member, Government of India:

"In the course of our conversation on the 6th of February, I spoke to you at great length about Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan's case and you were good enough to assure me that you would write to the Bombay Government suggesting a substantial reduction in his sentence. But, far from any such thing happening, even the mild recommendation of the Inspector-General of Prisons for some jail in the Punjab or the North-West Frontier Province, on grounds of his failing health, has been rejected, according to the papers, by the Punjab and the Frontier Governments. Since I saw Khan Saheb on the 5th March last, the press has published bad reports of his health."

In reply, Sir Henry Craik wrote on June 7: "Shortly after I met you I went very carefully into the case again and considered both the judgement of the trying magistrate and all the surrounding circumstances of the case, including former speeches delivered by Abdul Ghaffar Khan since his release. I also took the opportunity of obtaining views of the N.-W. Frontier Government and my final conclusion was that there was no justification for me taking the initiative in this matter and suggesting to the Bombay Government that his sentence be reduced."

On June 16 Vallabhbhai Patel angrily wrote to Sir Henry Craik:

"I appreciate the frankness with which you have allowed me to know the working of your mind in the case of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. You will permit me, however, to assure you that I have a distinct recollection that you felt so much the severity of the sentence that you said that you would suggest to the Government a substantial reduction. I am fortified in this statement by what you said to Mr. Bhulabhai Desai also. May I also point out that when a prisoner makes an unsolicited expression of regret for what he has done, it is not fair to bring against him his past declarations.

"I understand the difficulties of the Central Government in transferring the Khan Saheb to a jail in any other province, but the case will, I think, be met if he could be transferred to a cooler place in the same presidency as, for instance, Nasik or Yeravda. The Khan Saheb himself

suggested this when Mahatma Gandhi and I had occasion to interview him on May 31st, and Mahatmaji has already requested the Bombay Government to see if the suggestion could be accepted."

The working of the mind of Sir Henry Craik was only partially revealed to Vallabhbhai Patel. In a confidential note, the Home Secretary wrote on February 26:

"I undertook to draft a letter to Sir Ralph Griffith on the question of a possible reduction of sentence in the case of Abdul Ghaffar Khan after I had discussed the matter with the Home Member the other day. On starting to draft the letter and on refreshing my memory on the previous history of the case I find strong objections to suggesting a reduction of sentence . . . I quite recognize that there are certain extenuating features in the actual case in which Abdul Ghaffar was convicted. Having regard to these extenuating circumstances, it would have been quite possible for the original court or the appellate court, if an appeal had been filed, to impose a less severe sentence. But it is indeed a very different matter for the sentence to be reduced by the Executive Government, and such action would, in my opinion, tend to create embarrassment. In passing the sentence the magistrate appears to have been influenced by the fact that, as stated in the penultimate sentence of the judgement, 'The accused is a man of great influence and his words would have a greater effect than that of an ordinary person.'

"If and when released, there is no doubt in my mind that, having regard to his fanatical nature, he will continue to make similar speeches. He cannot, I think, restrain himself even if he wants to. To what areas he would specially devote his attention is not certain. But there is reason to believe that, in particular, he might devote attention to Bengal, and I have no doubt if he repeated the speeches which he had delivered there a few months ago, they would all tend to create a deterioration in the situation. Apart, however, from what he might do when released, we must also consider what would be the effect generally if Government reduced the sentence.

"I would remark that there is no sufficient justification for reducing it on the ground of his ill health. It is true that the climate of Bombay does not suit him, but the Government of Bombay are taking steps to get him removed and that removes any justifiable complaint on this ground. If we release him on the ground of ill health, there might also be similar agitation for similar treatment being accorded to M. N. Roy who is frequently reported to be ill, and it might possibly be contended that Nehru was also unwell. It would thus be a dangerous precedent.

"Apart from this, I feel that a reduction of sentence might have the effect in the North-West Frontier Province of creating the impression

that Government were relaxing in their attitude towards agitators and might thereby give encouragement to the other organizers of the Red Shirt movement. Not only in the Frontier but elsewhere, I think, that a reduction of the sentence passed on a leader whose activities had been so extremely dangerous in the past, would undoubtedly convey the impression that Government were relaxing, and that if this treatment was accorded to Abdul Ghaffar, it would also be accorded to Nehru. I fully recognize that in the case of Satyapal a lower sentence was imposed. But Satyapal has not, I understand, in recent years had anything like the influence even in the Punjab itself that Abdul Ghaffar has, and certainly has not the same all-India influence that Abdul Ghaffar has. I feel very doubtful whether the sentence has been very strongly resented by Muslims generally or whether any reduction of it would tend to please them. For these reasons I consider that the proposal should be dropped."

Abdul Ghaffar narrates his jail experiences thus:

"The British Superintendent of the Sabarmati Jail was very strict and he confined me in a ward where even a warder was not permitted to approach me. The warder used to lock up the ward and watch me from outside. I was given 'B' class but the food and other amenities given here were of the standard of 'C' class of my province. I slept on the ground. There was none to speak to me. There were many monkeys around and I used to play with them. I was taken seriously ill with an attack of influenza, but I was not removed to the hospital and was not even provided with a bedstead. I had to lie on the cement floor. Only two short blankets were provided and they were insufficient during the winter. By the grace of God I recovered.

"In May 1935 Gandhiji came for an interview and due to his efforts I was promoted to 'A' class. Once the Inspector-General of Prisons visited me. I requested him to get me a particular convict cook from Bombay, as there was none to cook food for me. Ahmedabad climate did not suit me. He was a kindly person and once had lived in the Frontier Province. He said that he would get me transferred to a jail in the Punjab and get me a Pathan convict cook from Peshawar. I told him that the Punjab Government would never accept me and insisted on a cook from Bombay. He honestly believed that a Punjab jail and a Pathan cook would suit me better. The Punjab Government refused to accept me, but a cook from the Peshawar jail came. He was no cook but a tuberculosis patient. The intention was to infect me with tuberculosis. In August 1935 I was sent to a small district jail in Bareilly along with the cook, but not to the central jail where some political prisoners were confined. Their intention was to inconvenience me and to deprive me of company. There too, as at Sabarmati, I was kept in a solitary cell.

"Meanwhile, Dr. Khan Sahib was elected to the Central Assembly and the ban on his entry to the Frontier Province was lifted. He and his wife came for an interview with me.

"The Inspector-General of Prisons, Colonel Salamatulla Khan, was a decent man. When he came on a visit, I requested him to remove the cook. 'I don't want a T.B. patient as cook,' I told him. 'We are both inconvenienced.' Ultimately, the cook was transferred.

"Rafi Saheb Kidwai had come for an interview with me and so also the Minister for Jails. As summer was setting in, the minister recommended that I should be transferred to a cool place. When at Bareilly, I had to bear the hot wind that incessantly blows there. The whole of my body had been covered with small boils, and when already the oppressive heat had been borne by me, I was transferred to Almora jail when rains had started in that hilly tract. It rained continuously for days together, and I could not step out for a stroll. I was given the gardening work left unfinished by Jawaharlalji, who was also in that jail before me. As I did this work satisfactorily, I was given extra remission of fifteen days. Thus, I got, in all, a remission of four months and a half. When my sentence expired I was released, but I was banned from entering the Frontier Province and the Punjab. So I went back to Wardha."

On the way to Wardha, Abdul Ghaffar passed through Nagpur on the morning of August 1, 1936. A number of Congressmen went to the station to greet him. He was sleeping in a third-class compartment, legs stretched out beyond the seat, with a gunny bag as his pillow. That was his whole kit. He looked much pulled down in health and was having a slight temperature. He was glad to find so many people at the station to greet him. "This is the brotherhood of Congress," he remarked.

At Wardha, Abdul Ghaffar was again the guest of Jamnalal Bajaj. He walked daily to Segaon, a village, five miles away from Wardha, where Gandhi had established his new ashram a month earlier. The election campaign was on, but Gandhi confined himself to Segaon, doing constructive work. Visitors from far and near came to seek his advice. Abdul Ghaffar practically spent the whole day with Gandhi, who was down with malaria. By the end of September Gandhi began gradually to attend to his normal activities.

On October 2, 1936 Gandhi celebrated his sixty-seventh birthday quietly at Segaon. A fortnight later he left for Benares, accompanied by Abdul Ghaffar, to open the shrine of "Mother India", a huge relief map of India engraved on marble. Bhagwandas welcomed the guests to "the home of love" built by Sivaprasad Gupta. He stressed that the cardinal principles of all religions were the same—furtherance of love, peace and unity.

"As I was asked," Gandhi said, "to perform the closing ceremony in the morning and as I listened to the chanting of the Vedic mantras, I thought of a verse in our morning prayer, which we have been repeating now for twenty years—'Mother Earth, spouse of Vishnu, ocean-clad and mountain-breasted, I bow to thee. Forgive me the touch of my feet.' It is this Mother Earth, to the service and devotion of which, we are dedicating ourselves today. The mother who gave us birth was bound to die some day, not so the Universal Mother who bears and sustains us. She must die some day, but when she passes away, she would take all her children also along with her. She, therefore, demands a lifelong dedication."

Abdul Ghaffar expressed delight at being present at the function. He said that, in old days, mosques were built where people of all religions could go and say their prayers. He observed that the temple which the Mahatma had just opened, would fulfil the supreme purpose of a common place of worship and prayer.

From October 30 to November 2 Abdul Ghaffar stayed with Gandhi at Ahmedabad, where he was presented with an address by the municipality. At the public meetings he dwelt mostly on Hindu-Muslim unity and explained the significance of Khudai Khidmatgar movement.

On his return to Wardha with Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar issued a statement on November 19 in reply to the Frontier Home Member's speech on a resolution in the local council for the removal of the ban on his entry into the province:

"The Home Member is reported to have expressed his disbelief in my non-violence. And in support of it, he is credited with having produced before the house certain evidence, if it can be so called.

"He reminded the house of those scenes of intimidation that took place in the Charsadda Maidan during the last elections when things went so far in our constituency that only three voters had the courage to go to the polling-station. He asked if the freedom of franchise had been allowed on that occasion. Now, as it so happens, whatever the scenes were, they took place in my absence and in the absence of many of my co-workers who were at that time undergoing varying terms of imprisonment. The fact of only three voters going to the polls can hardly be accepted as any evidence of intimidation. Surely, during those days there were many places in India where voters had refrained from going in obedience to the call of the Congress for the boycott of the elections.

"Is it possible that thousands of voters could be intimidated into not exercising their right of voting? And surely the Government had far greater resources for intimidation than such Khudai Khidmatgars as were outside prison-walls and who were themselves many of the voters.

If now the voters go to the polls and vote for the Congress candidates, is it to be suggested that they did so also by intimidation?

"Another instance of my so-called violence is the fact that I did not attend a Durbar regarding the announcement of the so-called reforms and that I did not even reply to the invitation. All I can say is that the invitation was received through a friend and I gave my answer too through the friend. I never thought that it was a sin in not attending the Durbar. I may mention that too, was in pursuance of the Congress policy in which I thoroughly believed.

"Then the Home Member says that Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his party would have no co-operation with the Government as they declare the reforms to be inadequate. Nothing short of independence would satisfy him and his party. So the Government were compelled to take action and suppress the insurrectionary movement. I never knew that. Non-co-operation was the Congress non-co-operation, which was definitely described by it as a non-violent action. It was never declared illegal in any part of India. Nor was the desire and demand for independence illegal. And I certainly do not regard as violence the desire and demand for independence. It is worthy of note that the Congress creed mentions complete independence in so many words as the Congress goal, and I do not know that on that account the Congress is regarded as a violent body or as engaged in illegal activity.

"Then the Frontier Home Member refers to my speech for which I was sent to prison for two years as an instance of violent activity. This comes with little grace, for he should know that for certain passages in that speech I had expressed my unqualified regret before the court. And there was nothing violent in my speech. I was charged with sedition which is a statutory crime but is not, on that account, necessarily a violent activity. But I know that if there is violence in me, the want of evidence produced by the Home Member cannot exculpate me from it. And if there is real non-violence in me, no amount of evidence that the Home Member can produce can make me violent. It is a matter between my Maker and me, for He alone can read men's hearts. I can only state that for years I have believed in non-violence and its efficacy. I have seen it proved again and again in many instances that have come under my observation. In spite of whatever might be said to the contrary, I know what non-violence has done for the Khudai Khidmatgars and I claim that their activities are undoubtedly a glorious illustration of non-violence and its efficacy. This does not mean that the Khudai Khidmatgars have become perfect human beings. They and I are trying to become the humble servants of God and, therefore, of humanity, and we are progressively realizing the virtue of non-violence and are

trying to exercise it. Non-violence has become an article of living faith with many of us.

"And I would like to cite in support of this the testimony of Khurshedbehn Naoroji, the late Vithalbhai Patel, Father Verrier Elwin and Devadas Gandhi. Khurshedbehn Naoroji and Devadas Gandhi lived long enough among the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier Province and had every opportunity of coming in close contact with them. All four witnesses had made their investigations on different occasions and apart from one another. It will not be suggested that they were all duped into making false statements. Lastly, whether I am ever allowed to go to the Frontier or not, I have confidence that the Khudai Khidmatgars will always be true to the declaration they have made to observe non-violence under all circumstances, no matter how provocative, and that the voters of the Frontier Province will show at the polls by plumping for Congress candidates that they are behind the national movement for achieving complete independence of India, which is its birthright."

The Khudai Khidmatgar movement continued to be banned in the Frontier Province. One of the Hindu Mahasabha secretaries went out of the way to approve of the continuation of the ban. Jawaharlal Nehru was much upset by the statement and he had a curious dream. Abdul Ghaffar was being attacked on all sides and he was fighting to defend him. He woke up in an exhausted state, feeling very miserable, and his pillow was wet with tears.

In the last week of November, Vallabhbhai Patel and Bhulabhai Desai visited the Frontier Province for electioneering work after obtaining permission from the Governor, who had no objection to their visits, provided "the visits are limited to five days and nothing in the nature of a peripatetic whirlwind campaign in rural areas is attempted." In a confidential letter, Sir Henry Craik, Home Member, Government of India, wrote to Sir Ralph Griffith, Governor of the Frontier Province:

"I should like to bring to your notice certain considerations which in our view should be taken into account in deciding whether Vallabhbhai Patel should be allowed to enter the province. All-India Parliamentary Committee is, of course, a legitimate form of Congress, actively working on constitutional lines and it would certainly have embarrassing reactions if the chairman of such a body were prohibited from visiting the Frontier Province. In any case Patel is likely to have little personal appeal to the Pathan audiences, while, as you are probably aware, he is known to be strongly opposed to Nehru's communistic ideas and is probably jealous of Nehru's growing influence. We have information that he has been in close touch lately with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and these two recently had a long discussion with Gandhi, Nehru and

Rajendra Prasad, at which one of the subjects discussed was alleged interference by your Government in electioneering activities. It is thus probable that Patel would bring some message from Abdul Ghaffar Khan and he may also be expected to bring substantial financial assistance to the Red Shirt party. But even if Patel were externed from the Frontier, there would be no difficulty in conveying such a message or similar financial assistance by other means . . ."

As the year was coming to a close there was a stir about the election of the Congress President. Nehru had vitalized the Congress by touring throughout the country during his term of presidentship and it was widely felt that he should be re-elected for the Faizpur Congress, and Nehru again became the president.

The idea of having the Congress and the exhibition in a village originated from Gandhi and he was bent upon making the village session a success. The setting in which the Congress met at Faizpur, a village in Maharashtra, was impressive. Some 100,000 visitors, from far and near, had arrived and were assembled inside the "Tilak Nagar". On December 25 Gandhi opened the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition with a speech: "You could not but have noticed grand simplicity of the procession that was organized for our president, especially the beautifully designed and decorated chariot drawn by six pairs of bullocks. Well, all that was designed, in order to prepare you for what awaited you here. No city amenities or comforts, but everything that the poor villagers could provide. This place is thus a place of pilgrimage for us all, our Kashi and our Mecca, where we have come in order to offer our prayers for freedom and to consecrate ourselves to the nation's service. You have not come here to lord it over the poor peasants, but to learn how to get off their backs by participating in their daily toil, by doing the scavenger's job, by washing for yourselves, by grinding your own flour, etc. For the first time in the history of the Congress you are being given here rice unpolished of its substance and chapati made out of hand-ground flour, plenty of fresh air, and clean mother earth to rest your limbs upon. But you will please bear with all the organizers' shortcomings, for, in Khan Saheb's language, we are Khudai Khidmatgars, servants of God, come here not to take but to tender service."

Nehru in his address dwelt upon "the triumphant course of fascism in Europe," introducing an open gangsterism in international affairs and anticipated the war to which it would lead. In the midst of this reaction, he said, "the Congress today stands for full democracy in India and fights for a democratic state. It is anti-imperialist and strives for great changes in political and economic structure. I hope the logic of events will lead to socialism, the only remedy for India's economic ills."

Then he turned to India's problems, the new constitution, the constituent assembly, the need to oppose the federal structure of the act and to write on a clean slate afresh.

"One who was not with us at Lucknow has come back to us after long internment," Nehru observed at the beginning of the address. "We offer cordial welcome to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan for his own brave self as well as for the sake of the people of the Frontier Province whom he has so effectively and gallantly led in India's struggle for freedom. But though he is with us, he may not, so the orders of the British Government in India run, go back home or enter his own province or even the Punjab. And in that province of his the Congress organization is still illegal and most political activities prevented."

"We are apparently weak," he concluded, "not really so. We grow in strength, the empire of Britain fades away. Because we are politically and economically crushed, our civil liberties taken away, hundreds of our organizations made illegal, thousands of young men and women always kept in prison or in detention camp, our movements continually watched by hordes of secret service men and informers, our spoken word taken down, lest it offend the law of sedition, because of all this and more we are not weaker but stronger, for all this intense repression is the measure of our growing national strength. War and revolution dominate the world and the nations arm desperately. If war comes or other great crisis, India's attitude will make a difference. We hold the keys of success in our hands if we but turn them rightly. And it is the increasing realization of this that has swept away the defeatist mentality.

"Meanwhile, the general election claims our attention and absorbs our energy. Here too we find official interference, in spite of denial, and significant attempts to prevent secrecy of voting in the case of illiterate voters. But we shall win in these elections in spite of all the odds—state pressure, vested interest, money.

"That will be but a little step in a long journey, and we shall march on, with danger and distress as companions. We have long had these for our fellow-travellers and we have grown used to them. And when we have learnt how to dominate them, we shall also know how to dominate success."

The Congress, after making a resolve to resist exploitation of India and her people, her man-power and resources for the purposes of British imperialism in the event of a world war breaking out, addressed itself to the question of peace in the frontier of India and friendship with the neighbours. "It is the firm belief of the Congress that the policy pursued by the Government of India in the North-West Frontier has been a total failure, conceived as it is in the interests of imperialism. The Congress

believes that the charge laid against the Frontier Pathan tribes as being fierce and aggressive is baseless and that it is possible to make them a valuable source of strength by cultivating friendly relations with them."

At Faizpur itself the following order dated Peshawar, December 14, 1936, under section 5 of the North-West Frontier Province Public Tranquillity Act, was handed over to Abdul Ghaffar by the Superintendent of Police, East Khandesh:

"Whereas the Chief Secretary is satisfied that there are reasonable and sufficient grounds for believing that you have acted in a manner prejudicial to the public tranquillity and in furtherance of movement prejudicial to the public tranquillity, the Governor-in-Council hereby directs that you shall not enter, remain or reside in the N.-W. Frontier Province; the order to remain in force until 29th December, 1937."

Call Of The Frontier

1937–8

The Congress session at Faizpur over, leaders plunged themselves into electioneering. Gandhi was wholly absorbed in village reconstruction work, and Abdul Ghaffar was by his side imbibing the true spirit of the constructive work. Patel was in charge of the election campaign, with Jawaharlal Nehru as star campaigner. Nehru shot like an arrow all over India except in the N.-W. Frontier Province, where he was not allowed to enter. "Let every voter vote for the Congress," he urged. "Thus we shall write in millions of hands our flaming resolve to be free."

In February 1937 the results of the general elections were out. The Congress secured an overwhelming victory at the polls and was returned as a majority party in six out of the eleven provinces and as the largest single party in all. In the predominantly Muslim Frontier Province, Congress candidates were elected to 15 of the 36 seats reserved for Muslims, while the Muslim League was not able to win a single seat. In all, the Khudai Khidmatgar party won 19 seats in a house of 50. The Congress victory made a profound impression. *The Times* commented: "Congress party has won its victories on issues which interested millions of Indian rural voters and scores of millions who had no votes."

At the end of February, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha. The resolution congratulating the nation on its response to the call of the Congress said: "The committee realizes the high responsibility with which the nation has charged it, and it calls upon the Congress organization and, in particular, the newly elected Congress members of the legislature, to remember always this trust and responsibility, to uphold the Congress ideals and principles, to be true to the faith of the people and to labour unceasingly as soldiers of swaraj for the freedom of the motherland and the emancipation of her suffering and exploited millions."

The committee declared that the primary allegiance of Congressmen as well as all other Indians, was to the Indian people, and the oath of allegiance, in order to enable participation in the work of legislatures, did not affect in any way this primary duty and allegiance. It reminded Congress legislators that "all effective work in the legislatures must have the sanction of the people behind it and, therefore, all work in the legislatures must be co-ordinated with Congress activity outside." Congress policy in the legislature was: "The Congress adheres to its general and

basic policy of non-co-operation with the apparatus of British imperialism, except in so far as circumstances may require a variation. The object of the Congress is Complete Independence and to that end its activities are directed. The immediate objective of the Congress is to fight the new constitution and to lay stress on the nation's demand for a constituent assembly. The Congress members should press for the carrying out of the Congress programme as enunciated in the election manifesto and its agrarian resolution. Under the existing act with all its safeguards and special powers in the hands of the Viceroy or the Governor and its protection of the services, the dead-locks are inevitable. They should not be avoided when they occur while pursuing Congress policy."

In the third week of March, Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar proceeded to Delhi to attend the All-India Congress Committee meeting. Opinion within the Congress leadership was sharply divided on the issue of office acceptance. The right-wing leaders maintained that by forming ministries the Congress could improve its position in the fight against the new constitution. Nehru, Subhas Bose and the left-wing groups were opposed to taking office. After heated discussion the A.-I.C.C. adopted Gandhi's compromise formula, authorizing the acceptance of offices in the provinces where the Congress commanded a majority in the legislature.

On March 19 the convention of the Congress members of the provincial legislatures met in Delhi to pledge: "I, a member of this all-India convention, pledge myself to the service of India and to work in the legislatures and outside for the independence of India and the ending of the exploitation and the poverty of her people. I pledge myself to work under the discipline of the Congress for the furtherance of the Congress ideals and objectives to the end that India may be free and independent and her millions freed from the heavy burdens they suffer from."

For the first time, since his release, Abdul Ghaffar got an opportunity to meet his colleagues from the Frontier Province at the Delhi session of the A.-I.C.C. "I do not feel dejected over the action of the Governor in offering the chief ministership to Sir Abdulqayyum," he told them. "If you could not return your men in a large majority, you should not have any cause of complaint if the chief ministership did not come to you. Whatever might have been your success or failure, go ahead with your constructive programme with redoubled energy."

At the end of March, the Governors invited the leaders of the Congress majorities to accept appointments as premiers and to form their own cabinets. Each Governor was asked to give his presumptive premier an assurance drafted by Gandhi, which the latter might make public in the following identical terms: "That in regard to the constitutional activities of his ministers His Excellency will not use his special powers of

interference or set aside the advice of the cabinet," and these assurances not having been given, the leaders expressed their inability to form the ministries. April 1st, the day of inauguration of the act, was marked all over India as a day of protest against "a new charter of slavery".

The position of the *ad interim* ministries appointed by the Governors on the refusal by the majority party to form the Government, was becoming more and more difficult. As they could not face the legislature, the legislature was not summoned in spite of repeated demands from the elected members. But it had to be summoned within the first six months and budget had to be passed. This deepening crisis led to the largest advance on the part of the Government. Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, accepted Gandhi's suggestion that "it is only when the issue between a Governor and his minister constitutes a serious disagreement that any question of the severing of their partnership may arise." The Viceroy's statement ended the dead-lock. The Working Committee at its meeting in Wardha on July 8 resolved that the Congressmen be permitted to accept office.

By the end of July the leaders of the Congress parties in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Orissa formed the Congress ministries. Soon after, the agreement of eight non-Congress members in the Frontier Province to co-operate with Congress gave the latter an absolute majority there, leading to the formation of a Congress ministry by Dr. Khan Sahib.

Abdul Ghaffar visited Bombay, Patna and Lucknow and preached Hindu-Muslim unity. In the last week of August, when the ban on his entry in the Frontier was removed, he told the press in Karachi that he would decide his future programme after reaching the province.

Replying to the questions on the activities of the Fakir of Ipi, he said that he was not a fakir. He was a very rich man of the place, an educated landlord. He was a patriot, having great influence. His aim was to free his country, and he knew no rest till success was achieved. But he was presented in interested quarters as an orthodox, simply to discredit him and his followers and to proclaim to the world that it was the orthodox section of the Muslims who were creating all sorts of trouble. The tribesmen were very sore at this and in a jirga called by the Fakir of Ipi, they discussed the present situation and condemned very strongly the kidnapping, loot and arson carried on by a mischievous section and invited the Hindu leaders to inquire into the condition of the Frontier. But no news was allowed to come and even what came out was false and mutilated. The speaker deplored this state of affairs and advised the people not to believe in such wild rumours. "I fear," he added, "I will not be allowed to meet the tribesmen even after the removal of the ban."

At long last, after six years of exile, Abdul Ghaffar entered the North-West Frontier Province at the end of August 1937. He was welcomed back amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. His reception was followed by a mass meeting at Peshawar. Addressing the gathering he said: "Thank God, I am once again with you to share your joys. But the real joy has yet to come, and our happiness is meaningless until we have achieved our goal of independence. Our struggle for freedom has reached a stage that calls for still greater sacrifices from us. As for my part, let me tell you once again that I will continue to struggle for liberty until we have shaken off the foreign yoke and set up a true people's government in this country."

The success achieved by the Congress party in the Frontier Province, led to the flying visit of the Congress President, Jawaharlal Nehru, to the province in October 1937. This was his first visit and he was overwhelmed with enthusiastic welcome amidst loud report of crackers when he reached Peshawar on October 14. A corps of Khudai Khidmatgar volunteers presented the guard of honour to the Congress President at the railway platform. He was received by Abdul Ghaffar, Dr. Khan Sahib and many other prominent workers and members of the provincial assembly. He was taken in a decorated car, with Abdul Ghaffar by his side, in a mile-long procession, cheered by over one lakh of people. Besides, ten thousand Khudai Khidmatgar volunteers in their red uniform, who headed the procession, Khaksar volunteers in khaki uniform, carrying spades, and members of other political and social organizations joined the procession. The tricolour flags were displayed all over the city. The procession took a couple of hours as it passed through over a hundred decorated gates to reach the Kabuli Gate, from where Nehru and his party drove to Dr. Khan Sahib's residence.

Addressing a mammoth meeting at Peshawar, Nehru paid handsome tributes to Abdul Ghaffar and stated that he was not only "Fakhr-e-Afghan" but it was right to call him "Fakhr-e-Hind." There was hardly another person, excepting Mahatma Gandhi, whose work was so wide-spread and he was truly the symbol of India's heroism and courage.

"Communal questions", he said, "had no relation with the common people and were raised by those who do not want to end the present order of things. The meaning of swaraj, he explained, was not mere change in bureaucracy. "We are up against the grinding-machine that crushes us. What way does it improve things if that wheel goes on as such with the help of an Indian instead of a Britisher? We have to see that the reigns of the government are not in the hands of a handful of men but in the hands of the common people who number thirty-five crores." He emphasized that a constituent assembly based on the adult

franchise would be the only competent body to frame a constitution for India.

He condemned the merciless bombing of the tribal people and said that it was most vulgar that the Indian soldiers should be engaged to slaughter them. He thought the tribal question could be solved by our trying to understand them and meet their views.

On October 15th Nehru and Abdul Ghaffar left for Utmanzai. The village which attracted a large number of people from the adjoining places, presented scenes of great enthusiasm. He was received at Abdul Ghaffar's residence by Wali. Nehru then proceeded to the Azad School founded in 1920 for training the village youths for national service. The staff and students of the school presented an address of welcome to the Congress President. In it the unshaken confidence of the Frontier people in the Indian National Congress was stressed.

Nehru said in reply that there was hardly any part of India which did not know this little town of Utmanzai, which is remembered with love and pride for the glorious part its inhabitants played in India's struggle for freedom. None could forget that, and it was his ardent desire to pay a loving homage to the people of the Frontier by his personal visit. He paid tributes to the courage shown by the Pathans during the civil disobedience movement, and as the sentinels of this land they had great responsibilities.

"You put me to shame," he said, "when you tell me of my suffering and my sacrifices. How insignificant they are really when compared to those of thousands among you who had suffered much more!" He admitted that he learnt many a lesson from the Frontier people and was inspired with more courage through their association. "I do not know when we shall be free," he said. "There are still some people in India who are content to remain slaves. But India must be free. And whether we remain or not, you young men, I am sure, will be able to breathe in a free India."

After visiting the Khyber Pass, Nehru returned to Peshawar on the 16th, when the students presented him a welcome address in the Islamia College. Speaking on the occasion he referred to his visit to the historic Khyber Pass, which, he said, took his mind back to the ancient glory of India and brought pictures of thousands of years of Indian history.

On the day of his departure, on October 17, Nehru said: "Three days in the Frontier Province—three brief days I spent there and saw with my own eyes this historic gateway of India, rich with memories of our long past, rich also with memories of recent brave deeds and sufferings for the sake of India's freedom. I saw the gallant people of this northern tip of India, and their virile enthusiasm and discipline and frank and

simple nature captured my heart. The freedom of India has no stouter soldiers, no braver defenders, and to have comrades such as these, is a joyous privilege and a rare delight. Guardians of the gateway of India, they are also foremost among the fighters and guardians of our national freedom. They can learn much from the more sophisticated people of other provinces, but others can also learn much of courage and brave endurance and splendid discipline and freedom from narrow sectarianism from these dear comrades of ours in the north. And so we shall march together, struggle side by side, and win together in that great enterprise of India's freedom which draws our millions ever forward. To the north I have brought the admiration and comradely greetings of the people of other provinces. Affection and hospitality overwhelmed me, and now I go back with living and throbbing pictures in my mind and tens of thousands of voices ringing in my ears. These voices pull me back, and even as I go away, the call of the Frontier comes to me and soon I hope to renew acquaintance with these brave comrades of the north."

Jawaharlal Nehru, giving his impressions to Dr. Rammanohar Lohia for *The Congress Socialist,* said:

"During my brief tour in the Frontier, I was personally intensely conscious of the unity of India. It may be that this was due to a certain subjective state, but I think this had an objective foundation as well. I was also conscious of the fact that the people of the Frontier Province thought in terms of Indian unity and Indian freedom. Probably, their thoughts were vague and could not bear any cross-examination; nevertheless, they were there as a solid, obvious fact. They were continually referring both in their public addresses and in their private talks to the freedom of India and not to any local freedom of their own. Probably, this sense of Indian unity and freedom has consciously grown in them in the recent years, since the non-co-operation movement and after, but I imagine that the background of it was present long before.

"It is true that they have a strong feeling of kinship with the people across the border, with the border tribes in the semi-independent area beyond India and in Afghanistan. Even with the Afghans proper they have the feeling of kinship because of language and cultural relations, but politically speaking they look very definitely to India. It is obvious that the tightening of the political bonds between the Frontier Province and the rest of India has been indeed due to common sacrifices for a common cause.

"One thing is very apparent in the Frontier and that is the absence of what is known as the communal spirit in the rest of India. Even in matters of religion, though they are undoubtedly religious in a broad

sense, they are far removed from bigotry. They are a very child-like people, with the virtues and failings of children. It is not easy for them to intrigue and so their actions have a certain simplicity and sincerity which commands attention. Their customs also afford a pleasant contrast to some of the customs prevailing in the other parts of India. For instance, purdah is not very prevalent except in cities, and the further away one goes the less of it there is. There was a regular corps of Pathan women volunteers among the Red Shirts. In the tribal areas I am told there is no purdah at all.

"I do not know enough about these tribal ones to say much. But one thing is obvious that their love for independence is something fierce and unquenchable. Only a process approaching extermination is likely to end it. The only possible approach to them will have to be a friendly approach, giving them perfect freedom. To any hostile approach they will put up, as they have put up in the past, an unbending resistance. But they are very susceptible to friendship and they will do anything almost for those whom they consider their friends. A friendly approach, therefore, is certain to be awarded with the best of results. It must be remembered that this tribal area is a narrow strip of territory, from fifty to eighty miles across, containing sparse population. And the numbers affected are thus relatively small. They are terribly poor and their problems are basically economic. It should not be difficult to solve them from the economic point of view, but that solution itself will fail if it involves forcible political suppression. Whatever they do, they will have to do willingly.

"Sometime back there was a report in the newspapers that the Waziri leader had delivered a speech in which he condemned the kidnappings that had taken place and said that some mischief-makers were responsible for them. So far as he was concerned, he was strongly opposed to such crimes, as they only brought discredit to him and his followers. He would do everything in his power to punish the miscreants. Indeed, he invited the leaders of the national movement to come and inquire on the spot. It was not possible under the circumstances for any such inquiry to be held, but I think that in this matter of kidnappings his statement was a perfectly bona fide one. It was obviously not to his interest that such things should occur. He is up against a big thing, that is, the Forward Policy of the British Government, and the kidnapping of a few individuals does not help. It only prejudices the people against him. We must remember that these tribal people are no fools, although they are simple and, more or less, uneducated folk. Men who have the power of organization and resistance that their leaders have shown, must have some understanding of events. I feel quite sure that such men when

approached in a right way and in a free manner, will be willing to meet that approach more than half-way. It is not a pleasant or an easy thing for them to continue to suffer the terrible hardships which modern war with its aeroplanes and bombing brings. They would like an honourable way out, but they would not look at anything which involves their subjection. There should be no difficulty in a free India in dealing with them on friendly terms. The Forward Policy involving periodical little wars has been a patent failure even from the point of view of the British Government. It has not succeeded in subduing the tribes but only the heavy cost of it has fallen on India. It is stated that recent operations in Waziristan have cost a lakh of rupees a day. The air bombing expeditions, though they involve a great deal of damage and destruction, have not shaken the morale of the tribal people. Whatever other policy might be adopted, the present British policy must be given up.

"I must say that I was deeply impressed by the people of the Frontier Province. I am used to huge crowds and popular enthusiasm, but the discipline and quiet dignity of these people were striking. The words they uttered did not seem to be airy flourishes, meaning little. They seemed to mirror the desire of their hearts and behind them they carried the impression of reserves of strength. The whole of India has reason to be proud of these Frontier people, and inevitably when India is a free country, as it should be before many years are out, they will have an honoured place in it.

"It may be that these Frontier people may teach us many a lesson. They are not men of words and any resolution for them is something which has to be translated into deeds. The most significant example of this has been their adherence to the policy of non-violence during our struggle. This policy has affected the whole of India very deeply and it has been largely imbibed by the people as a whole, who have gradually come to recognize its efficacy. Still, for many it is a synonym for inactivity, and for some it is a cloak for cowardice. But nobody can accuse the Pathans of physical cowardice in a struggle. If they have accepted non-violence and acted up to it, it is through their strength, not weakness. Their example is thus full of meaning for all of us, and it will help us to develop this technique even further, combining peaceful action with efficient action, leading to results.

"The development of the popular mass movements in other countries shows an ever-growing reliance on a peaceful technique of struggle. This is in contrast with the aggressive and blatant violence of fascist countries. Where these peaceful methods have been pursued, strength has been built up for the popular cause, as in France, 'front populaire'. In Spain, this happened also to a large extent, but militarist and fascist violence

brought about a crisis. What will happen in other countries, it is difficult to say. But it seems, in any event, the right and the expedient course for the People's Front movement is to build up on peaceful lines. In India, probably, the chances and advantages of such a peaceful development of strength are greater than elsewhere. Danger here as elsewhere comes from the possible violence from the other side. It should be remembered also that the background of the Indian struggle though essentially peaceful, is equally dynamic and ultimately coercive. Therefore, the old-styled pacifist doctrine of passivity has no application to our non-violent, dynamic struggle, which is far from being passive."

Nehru felt sorry that he could see but little of the Frontier Province during his brief stay, but his desire was so intense that he did not wish to let go the first opportunity. Early in the following year, he again went on a week's visit to the Frontier Province. Amidst scenes of enthusiasm he commenced his Frontier tour on the morning of January 21, 1938. He changed the train at Taxila before dawn. On the way the crowds gathered on railway platforms at all stations in the early hours of the morning, holding blazing torches and shouting "Inquilab Zindabad." He was received at the Havelian railway station by Abdul Ghaffar, who accompanied him throughout his Frontier tour. They travelled in car, truck, and in tonga driven by his host, Badshah Khan.

He paid a flying visit to Abbottabad, Mansehra, Baffa, Haripur and to several villages in Mardan district before coming to Peshawar. He toured through the districts of Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan, and within one short week he addressed thirty mass meetings in various places. He visited all political centres of the province, where thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars paraded the streets in his honour. He received hearty welcome from the tribesmen across the border. The Afridis kept beacon fires burning at several points on hill-tops of the Kohat Pass the whole night. They could be seen from several miles around.

At Bannu an impressive ceremony was witnessed in the morning of January 26 when the Congress President hoisted the tricolour flag. In a short speech he said that behind the national flag were untold sufferings and sacrifices of millions of countrymen. The flag was the symbol of India's freedom and unity of different communities. It was the symbol of India's dignity and respect. Whoever disrespected it, dishonoured the Indian nation. He then requested Abdul Ghaffar to read the independence pledge in Pakhtu. The entire congregation of thousands including Nehru, solemnly repeated the pledge, phrase by phrase, Abdul Ghaffar leading:

"We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil

and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence.

"We recognize that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to swaraj following the peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain independence.

"We pledge ourselves anew to the independence of India and we solemnly resolve to carry on non-violently the struggle for freedom till Purna Swaraj is attained."

Abdul Ghaffar observed that the Congress was representative of all sections of the Indian people and gave utterance to the groaning cries of starving millions. The Congress alone could deliver the message of liberty to all—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

In another meeting of 20,000 persons, including a number of Wazirs, Nehru urged the people to be ready for the next struggle. He praised the people of the Frontier for their past record in the struggle. Referring to Abdul Ghaffar, he said: "The province has produced one great man in whom all India took pride. He has lifted the Frontier people out of the morass, changing the whole atmosphere. He created the great army of Khudai Khidmatgars and mobilized such an arms-loving race for a heroic non-violent struggle for freedom. It is a miracle that he has performed. The weapon of non-violence is a mighty weapon. Only the bold and the daring can wield it. We challenged the British power boldly. Through it, the withering and drooping spirit of India gained vitality. Power alone can meet power. Only air-bombers can face air-bombers, not bows and arrows or even guns—weapons which have become antiquated and useless. So India forged this new weapon of non-violence to face a powerful enemy and shook the British Empire to its foundations."

Replying to certain fears mentioned in the various addresses on behalf of Hindu and Sikh associations, Nehru said their plea of being a small minority was not proper and tenable. They had to share the joys and sorrows in common with the people inhabiting the province and create mutual confidence. And indeed their strongest armour would be their friendship with them. No better safety could they get than through

their ties of intimacy with the rest of the people. Recalling the gallant part played by Indian women in the cause of independence, he appealed to the women assembled there not to depend on any one for protection. They must have self-confidence to be courageous. Referring feelingly to his daughter, Indira, he said that she was still young but he had sent her thousands of miles away for studies. Since the time she was seven years old, he used to send Indira alone everywhere so that she might develop confidence in herself and grow into a brave soldier of India's freedom. If ever she visited this part of the country—as he hoped she would sometime—he would ask her to go alone to Waziristan. He had confidence in Waziris and Indira.

He severely criticized the Forward Policy. "Do you think," he asked, "the British Government invaded Waziristan because, say, one or two or some Hindu women had been kidnapped? That is not the way of the British Government. There are other ways to get back the women. But the fact remained that their interests are different. The trans-border territory is invaded in furtherance of imperialist designs and to push back their frontiers and to strengthen themselves. They make such occasions as tribal raids as only a pretext. There can be no justification whatever for the waste of millions of our money."

Explaining Congress policy of establishing brotherly contacts with the people living in the trans-border territories and neighbouring countries Nehru said: "They must trust us. We must prevent the happenings of anything undesirable or untoward."

Referring to the Fakir of Ipi's letter to him, Nehru said that the fakir and leading Waziri chief vehementally resented the gross accusations levelled against them by interested persons who had their own axe to grind. The letter written in Persian was addressed to him as Congress President, and the invitation was extended to him and other Congress leaders to visit the territory and verify the truth of their statements. The letter conveyed their firm resolve to shed their last drop to regain their integrity and freedom. "One brief moment of freedom is far preferable to a thousand years of slavery." The fakir unequivocally condemned the action of the raiders: It was a slur on the fair name of Islam and the tribes. The speaker did not question the veracity of the statement. He emphasized that friendly relations with neighbours were not only essential to India's safety but were necessary for the political advancement of India. Left to themselves, the Congress and Abdul Ghaffar Khan were competent to tackle the problem to prevent all inroads of the Waziris.

Nehru was shown great respect everywhere he went. At one place, 300 tribal riflemen surrounded him. One of the Maliks did him a signal honour by offering him a goat. Another Malik excelled him by placing

his son at Nehru's feet. During his drive, at Kohat, Afridis honoured him by spreading costly carpets on the road. Wherever Nehru went, thousands of people came out from villages on the roadside.

Addressing the last meeting at Dera Ismail Khan on the evening of January 26, Nehru said that during his seven days' tour he had seen many unforgettable pictures of the present but often his mind had wandered to the past. The Frontier area was rich in the memories of India's long history. For thousands of years, caravan after caravan had trekked through the narrow passes of the north-west. Many strange and needy peoples had come to this land of ours and were absorbed by India. The Aryans came long ago and left their tremendous impress on India. The Scythians, Turks and Huns also came and many of them settled down and even today there was much of Scythian blood in our Rajput races. The other day he crossed the Indus almost at the spot where Alexander crossed it and in the picture of his mind he saw the Macedonian army entering the fertile plains of India. And later, Asoka left imperishable memorials all over the Frontier tracts. Peshawar became the capital of a mighty empire ruled by Kanishka, spreading from the Vindhyas to Central Asia. It was a Buddhist empire, and then came to Peshawar the pilgrims and students in search of learning from the West and the Far East. It was the meeting-place of three great cultures—the Indian, the Chinese and the Greco-Roman. Later, again the Arabs suddenly rose into prominence and in one tremendous sweep of conquest spread from China to Spain. They knocked at the doors of India but did not enter it. It is well to remember that Islam was India's friendly neighbour for hundreds of years without conquest or conflict. It was when the Central Asian conquerors came to India as invaders that there was conflict. And this conflict was political, not religious, although it was exploited in the name of religion. Mahmud of Ghazni came as a ruthless conqueror and looted India, but how many people know that one of his best armies in Central Asia consisted of the Indian and Hindu troops under a general named Tilak? It was across these Frontier tracts that India sent her message of religion and art to the Far East, and so many pilgrims made a long journey to India in search of learning. All these and many other pictures came to his mind as he wandered across the Frontier Province.

Gandhi's First Visit

1938

In the second week of February, 1938, the annual session of the Congress was held at Haripura, under the presidentship of Subhas Bose. At Haripura, the Congress had suddenly to face the ministerial crisis in the United Provinces and Bihar, where the premiers insisted on their right to order the wholesale release of all political prisoners. The Governors with the support of the Governor-General objected and two ministries resigned. After months of public silence, due to bad health and other reasons, Gandhi issued a statement on the ministerial crisis: "The action of the Governor-General bewilders me and makes me suspect whether the proposal to discharge the prisoners in question was merely the last straw and that the Congress ministers in general had fatigued the British authority. How I wish that it was possible for the Governor-General to retrace his steps and avert a crisis whose consequences nobody can foretell."

The Government faced with the Congress discipline averted the crisis. The British authority was alarmed over the headway the Congress ministries were making along the constructive lines and their increasing popularity. In the North-West Frontier Province, Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry introduced Pakhtu as a compulsory medium of instruction for primary education, gave relief to the agriculturists, abolished the nomination system in the local boards, declared that all recruitment to public offices, whether ministerial or executive, shall be by open competition, removed restrictions on political parties, repealed the Frontier Crimes Regulation and also section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code, released all political prisoners, and introduced many other reforms in the interests of the common man. The Frontier Province was now very much a part of political India.

Gandhi had intended to visit the Frontier in early April but his preoccupation with Orissa and Bengal upset his plan. And as he failed, he sent his secretary, Mahadev Desai, for a few days to meet the Khan brothers. In the *Harijan* dated April 30, 1938, Mahadev Desai wrote:

"I drove with Dr. Khan Sahib to his residence where the younger brother Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan was staying. He was not at Utmanzai. 'Badshah Khan,' someone told us, 'is hardly to be found at home. He is wandering from village to village.' And it was with some difficulty that we found him in a neighbouring village. He was doing

his afternoon *namaz*, and we were told to wait until he returned from the masjid. There were a number of friends and relatives at home, but whilst they had not gone for their *namaz*, Khan Saheb, who never misses one of the five daily *namazes*, had gone to the masjid. Ever since 1921 he is popularly known as Badshah Khan among his people, who revere him as their king.

"I had heard about his fast and I requested him to tell me all about it. 'There was a death in a certain village,' he said, 'and the relatives of the deceased were very keen on my saying the prayers before the body was carried to the graveyard. I was in a hurry to leave for another village and so I suggested that the prayers should be said in the nearest masjid. The *maulvis* in the village, however, insisted that the prayers should be said in the *maqbarra* which was some distance from the village. I pleaded with the *maulvis* and said that I had been to Mecca and Medina and there was no objection to saying funeral prayers in a masjid. But the *maulvis* maintained that the practice was against the *shariat* and I was speaking in ignorance. We yielded. On our way back to the village the *maulvis* began calling me all kinds of names. This enraged the people and they fell upon the *maulvis*. Some of the Khudai Khidmatgars, who were there on the spot, intervened and rescued the *maulvis*. This was a laudable act, but then they proceeded to do what was not their business. The *maulvis* had knives and spears on them and the Khudai Khidmatgars wanted to wrest these from them, lest they should use them against the people. I was walking a little distance in front of these people, and as soon as I learnt that there was a little fracas, I rushed to the spot and found the Khudai Khidmatgars in the act of wresting the weapons. I told them that this was highly improper and that as I could not punish them I must punish myself, and declared a complete fast for three days. This had an electric effect. Everyone there was shocked. With tears they appealed to me to give up the fast and offered to take the punishment upon themselves. I explained to them that it was no use their doing so, that they must meet together and resolve never to repeat the thing, and left for Peshawar.'

"The fast was not the Islamic *roza* but a complete fast with permission to take water and salt. The Pathans who are hospitable to a fault and would not let a guest go away without making him eat something, could not bear a strict fast of this kind. They met in various places, and Khan Saheb was having numerous resolutions assuring him that the mistake would not be repeated.

"We then set out on Khan Saheb's tonga for villages in the east, driving through vast expanses of a country of fields, smiling with wheat and barley, and punctuated with lovely gardens. At every mile or two Khan

Saheb would drive into a village, introduce me to a Khan, tell me something about his history, and start for another. I saw them there in their simple mud huts—walls and roofs both of mud. Many of them had their revolvers and leather-belts full of cartridges. Khan Saheb said that the Pathan women observe no purdah, excepting the aristocratic families, but I saw no woman's face. As for the folks in the village, there is a wonderful spirit of democracy. The meanest servant in the house and the humblest farm-labourer comes and greets you and offers to shake hands with you. Every child in the village gives Badshah Khan his or her greeting, and Badshah must return the greeting. '*Kher ali,*' they say. '*Tre mash, tre mash,*' replies Khan Saheb. The first greeting corresponds to 'How do you do?'; the return greeting means literally, 'I hope you are not tired', that is, 'I hope you are free from all worries.'

"Cleanliness is hardly a strong feature of these villages, and the animals and the poultry do not help to improve it. In the evening we walk out through the fields along footpaths and canal-ridges. 'How smiling is this land,' says Khan Saheb. 'We have bumper crops. There are plenty of fruits. Fruits which in your part you prize and pay fancy prices for, grow here in abundance and go to waste. There is a quality about the grass we grow here that makes the cow's milk particularly rich. A cow gives as much as fourteen seers a day. And yet there is plenty of unemployment, and these folks do not get enough to eat. And their hospitality is lavish. We Pathans would waste any amount of money over entertaining guests, but if you ask them to contribute any hard cash, they would not do so. They are temperamentally incapable of giving any cash.'

"Everywhere, they inquire when Gandhiji is coming. I twit them about their revolvers. 'This sorts ill with your talk about Gandhiji and Khan Saheb,' I say to them. 'No,' they reply. 'When we go out with them we need not take them.' 'But why must you take them even when alone?' I ask. 'There are blood feuds, and one never knows when one be attacked. But Badshah Khan they will not touch,' they say.

"There have been deaths in two villages. We go there. At one place we sit solemnly, Khan Saheb makes a call for a brief prayer for the deceased, then some other caller does the same thing, and the visit comes to an end. At the other place, there is a large assemblage of callers. The call for the prayer is made twice, thrice, four times. Then the silence is broken by Khan Saheb who speaks to them on the value of the revival of handicrafts, being content with whatever the village can produce.

"Many of the Pathans are clad in khadi. They are Khudai Khidmatgars. They wear red shirts while on duty, otherwise, like Khan Saheb, they wear a shirt and pyjama of ashen grey. Khan Saheb has set the

fashion and it has become popular. Before the crowd of callers breaks up, one of the hosts insists on their staying to eat. I ask Khan Saheb whether it is customary to give something like a caste-dinner after death. 'No,' he says. 'But the bereaved family is supposed to do no cooking, and so some relative of the family undertakes to do the cooking. He feeds the family and also the guests who break bread with the bereaved and sympathize with them in their sorrow. The practice was to go on doing this for days together. I protested against this and now it is fast dying out. The *maulvis* are interested in bolstering up all kinds of usages and superstitions, and they swear at me because I am now working for their abolition.'

"Khan Saheb was good enough to take me for a little sight-seeing too. Close to the boundary of Mardan is a hill studded with Buddhist ruins. The ascent is a few hundred feet and quite easy. Buildings there are mostly in ruins, but the walls made up of thin square and oblong sheets of stone are still intact, making us wonder how they have held together all these centuries. The delicate carving of the parapets is still to be seen. The whole place gives one the impression of substantial mansions with vast meeting-halls or prayer-places. The old Pathan in charge took us down an underground cellar and said, 'This is a dungeon where prisoners used to be kept.' 'He is talking nonsense,' said Khan Saheb. 'I am sure this was no dungeon. It is quite likely that hermits prayed here in the summer and in extreme winter, and the whole place gives me an impression of a house of God than anything else.' 'Is it not in fitness of things, Khan Saheb,' I said, 'that you should preach the gospel of ahimsa where centuries ago the same gospel was preached by Buddhist monks and pilgrims?' Khan Saheb smiled in appreciation.

"The other place Khan Saheb took me to was the Khyber Pass. As our car winded its way along the narrow road that passes between two mountain ranges, Khan Saheb began to think aloud. Money has been poured like water over this military road and the military outposts and forts on the road right down to the Afghan frontier. Here and there on the sides of the hills are memorial tablets to soldiers killed in fighting the Afridis. Khan Saheb sees all this and says: 'Is it not a tragedy that we should not have been able to guard this narrow pass against the foreign invader? How woefully disunited and cowardly must we have been! To my mind the problem of defence of the Frontier appears to be pre-eminently simple, if we were united.'

"'And why these fights with the tribes?' he asked, as he showed me tribal villages, or rather clan strongholds, closed in with mud-walls on either side of the road. Far away in the distance, on high tops of hills, stood men with rifles but dressed like the Afridis. 'These are *khassedars*,'

he said, 'drawn from the tribes, and they are paid something to guard the road. These Afridis are plain, simple fellows like the Pathans, hospitable to a fault. They speak Pakhtu, and apart from their blood feuds they are well organized and close-knit. Why should it be difficult to make up with them? Why should they be bribed, and bombed when they cannot be bombed into submission? They want to make friends with us, and if we could solve the problem of their bread, they would live peacefully and amicably. But we are not allowed to go near them.'

"'Look at the way they live,' he said, as he pointed to small hollows in distant rocks. 'They are their caves, they have no other dwellings, and you can imagine what they would get to eat. They live principally on maize and barley-bread and lentils, supplemented at times by buttermilk. They get meat but rarely. And yet they are brave and long-lived. I tell you that I don't understand all your talk of vitamins. Find me a people whose food is more deficient of vitamins than these half-starved Afridis, and they are stronger and braver than most of the people who suffer from no vitamin deficiency. No, they are strong because they are pure and not civilization-spoilt. Adultery is non-existent, for the penalty is death.'

"'And what are those white flags flying over their habitations?' I asked. Well, if the British have their memorial tablets, the Afridis have their martyr flags. 'They are memorials of those who have died innocent deaths or died fighting with the British,' explained Khan Saheb. 'It is with these people that incessant wars are waged, and bombing is the latest weapon being used to subdue them.' "

Shortly after Mahadev Desai's visit, Gandhi started for the Frontier from Bombay, after having three hours' interview with Jinnah. Weak in body and depressed in spirits, he proceeded to the hospitable land of the Pathans to fulfil his long-standing promise.

On May 1st, when Gandhi arrived at Nowshera, twenty-five miles from Peshawar, he was given a grand reception by Abdul Ghaffar and his Khudai Khidmatgars. There was no rush, no noise and no bustle. Crowds in Peshawar lined the route for miles and showed remarkable discipline. At Dr. Khan Sahib's place where Gandhi stayed, the crowds did not disturb his work and rest, though they attended the morning and evening prayers. Hundreds of men came out in the morning and gathered in Dr. Khan Sahib's compound from early hours. Some of the women folk got up at 3 in the morning or even earlier, and had their bath and wash before coming to the prayer. There was no scramble for *darshan*, no noise during the prayer and none after.

Gandhi rarely accepted addresses those days, and he had hardly ever accepted a welcome address from a government college. But even in his

broken health, he would not refuse an address from the Islamia College and from the Edwardes College in Peshawar. The former said: "You have inspired the greatest man among us—Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. It was with your inspiration and guidance that Khan Saheb has succeeded in welding the warring elements into a well disciplined body of men. You have lifted this great struggle of freedom to the highest moral plane." It referred to the Hindu-Muslim unity and wished him success. In reply Gandhi said:

"It is well that you referred to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, and I would request you to consider what you can do in furtherance of that great cause. There is no doubt that the work belongs essentially to you of the younger generation. We are now getting old and will soon be gathered to our fathers. You have, therefore, to shoulder the burden. How can you help achieving the great object you have yourselves shown in your address by your appreciative reference to non-violence and to Khan Saheb's work? I do not know if your reference was deliberate and if you knew the full implication of what you were saying. I do hope you knew what you were saying and you fully weighed your words. If you have, then I should like to take you a step further. An Urdu newspaper has said that my mission in the Frontier Province is the emasculation of the Pathans. Whereas Khan Saheb has invited me here in order that the Pathans might hear the message of non-violence from my own lips, and in order that I might see the Khudai Khidmatgars at close quarters and find out to what extent non-violence has permeated them. That means that Khan Saheb, at any rate, has no such fear as has been expressed by that Urdu paper. For he knows that true non-violence is mightier than the mightiest violence. If, therefore, you really know the essential nature of non-violence and appreciate Khan Saheb's work, you will have to pledge yourselves to non-violence and that in spite of the fact that violence is so much in the air and we are talking, day in and day out, of military manoeuvres and aerial action, armaments and naval strength. You have to realize that the power of unarmed non-violence is any day far superior to that of armed force. With me acceptance of non-violence was instinctive, it was part of my training and home influence in childhood. Its superior strength I came to realize in South Africa, where I had to pit it against organized violence and racial prejudice. I returned from South Africa with a clear conviction of the superiority of the method of non-violence to that of violence.

"If the method of violence takes plenty of training, the method of non-violence takes even more training, and that training is much more difficult than the training for violence. The first essential of that training is a living faith in God. He who has a living faith in God, will not do evil

deeds with the name of God on his lips. He will not rely on the sword but will rely solely on God. But you may say that a coward may also pass off as a believer in God, saying he does not use the sword. Cowardice is no sign of belief in God. The true man of God has the strength to use the sword but will not use it, knowing that every man is the image of God.

"Islam, it is said, believes in the brotherhood of man. But you will permit me to point out that it is not the brotherhood of Musalmans only but it is universal brotherhood, and that brings me to the second essential of the training for non-violence. The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of Christians and the Ishwar of Hindus. As there are numerous names of God in Hinduism, there are as many names of God in Islam. The names do not indicate individuality but attributes, and little man has tried in his humble way to describe mighty God by giving Him attributes, though He is above all attributes, Indescribable, Inconceivable, Immeasurable. Living faith in this God means also acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. It also means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you, Hinduism is dear to me, and Christianity is dear to the Christians. It would be the height of intolerance—and intolerance is a species of violence—to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith.

"The third essential is the acceptance of truth and purity, for one claiming to have an active faith in God cannot but be pure and truthful.

"Now let me tell you that your appreciation of Khan Saheb's services and of non-violence carries all these implications, if the appreciation is genuine.

"Those who claim to lead, have to live up to all the implications and express them in their daily life. Now, you will not be the rank and file, but you will be leaders of your people. If you can live up to the ideal, you may be sure that no one will have any excuse for saying that non-violence is going to emasculate you. Yours will be the non-violence of the bravest."

Gandhi returned to the same theme in his reply to the Edwardes College address which said: "Born in a land where ahimsa was preached thousands of years ago, it was left to you to enunciate in your own remarkable way the doctrine of the non-violent passive resistance as the irresistible weapon in the hands of the weak and the oppressed."

"Your address is a paean of praise of me—I have never found it easy to appreciate such praise," he stated. "Let me tell you, there was no time in my life when I was less able to appropriate it than I am to-day. For a curious sense of despondency has possessed me and I cannot yet get over it. Well, I came here not to make a speech and I was told

that I need not give more than five minutes. But a sentence in your address compels me to devote a few minutes more than I had anticipated. The sentence about non-violent passive resistance at once took my memory back to Germiston in South Africa in 1907. A meeting of European friends was convened to hear me speak on passive resistance, as the movement was then known. The chairman of the meeting there made practically the statement as you have made in the address, that passive resistance was a weapon of the weak. The reference jarred on me and I immediately corrected the speaker. It is curious, if not also surprising, that you should have made the same mistake after all these years of satyagraha in India. We may be weak and oppressed, but non-violence is not a weapon of the weak. It is a weapon of the strongest and the bravest. Violence may be the weapon of the weak and the oppressed. Being strangers to non-violence, nothing else is open to them. It is, however, true that passive resistance has been regarded as a weapon of the weak. That was why the name 'satyagraha' was coined in South Africa to distinguish the movement there from passive resistance.

"Passive resistance is a negative thing and has nothing of the active principle of love. Satyagraha proceeds on the active principle of love which says: 'Love those that despitefully use you. It is for you to love your friends. But I say unto you, love your enemies.' If satyagraha is a weapon of the weak, I should be deceiving Khan Saheb, for no Pathan has yet confessed his weakness. It was Khan Saheb who told me that he never felt so strong and brave as when he, out of a free will, renounced the lathi and the rifle. If it was not the supreme weapon of the brave, I should certainly have hesitated to place it before a brave community like the Pathans. It is with that weapon that Khan Saheb can bid fair to befriend and convert the brave Afridis and the other tribesmen.

"I am glad to have had this opportunity of correcting you. For, the moment you realize it, you will enlist yourself as workers in the cause for which Khan Saheb and I are working. That it is difficult to carry conviction, I agree. I find it difficult in spite of my conscious practice of it for the last fifty years. But it presupposes purity of the highest type. Infinite patience is required—even the patience of emptying the ocean with a blade of grass."

Owing to weak health, he had to curtail the original programme. But Abdul Ghaffar would not let him go without his having a glimpse of the Frontier villages, and he, therefore, arranged a hurried tour of the Peshawar district. Gandhi went north to Shabkadar, and thence went eastward to Utmanzai, and further went to Mardan. The route from Peshawar to Mardan lay through numerous villages, and the whole of the country-side were either on the march or standing alongside to

welcome Gandhi, escorted by Badshah Khan. Pathans, old and young, men, women and children, received Gandhi with tears of joy. In every village, groups of people waited with a sleek, fat goat or a sturdy ram to be presented to Gandhi, as also with their home-made *nan*.

Abdul Ghaffar knew his people and his land which he had revolutionized. "Matta, Mahatmaji, is a village which has been the scene of fiercest repression," he said, "and it is where repression has been fierce, you find the spirit of the people at its best. Do not be carried away by the fact that the Pathan is a brave and hefty fellow. Even he used to cower before the twopenny-halfpenny policeman. But our movement drove this fear out of the Pathans and they stood like men even before the military. These women also took an active part, although they were not arrested."

As they drove from Shabkadar to Utmanzai, Gandhi passed a populous little village with well-built houses. "This is Turangzai," said Abdul Ghaffar, "the home of the famous Haji, known as the Haji of Turangzai, who is no more. He was a brave soul. The British spread all kinds of stories about him. I was described as the Haji's son-in-law by Sir Michael O'Dwyer."

At one village, where houses were burnt down by the police during the last campaign, a jirga was waiting to welcome Gandhi at the place where a new house had been built on the ruins. An old Khan presented Gandhi with a coat of handspun wool. "What am I to do with this?" asked Gandhi. "Wear it in winter," replied the Khan. "But I am coming back here in winter," said Gandhi. "Why not keep it until then for me? I have no wherewithal to keep it." The old Pathan laughingly said, "Surely, you are not serious!" "Yes, I am coming in winter and I want you to keep it until I come." "We will keep it then," the Khan said. "Yes, as my property," added Gandhi, making all shake with laughter.

During his brief stay, Gandhi saw hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgars. At every furlong or two, all along the route, they stood day and night. Every address of welcome mentioned of one thing, that should struggle be necessary in future, the Pathans would not be found wanting. Gandhi devoted almost all of his speeches to the implications of non-violence and addressed them especially to Khudai Khidmatgars. Abdul Ghaffar rendered them in forceful Pakhtu. Addressing a political conference at Peshawar, attended by 50,000 people, Gandhi said:

"In all your three addresses you have assured me that you made a triumphant and unique demonstration of non-violence during the civil disobedience campaign, and I have to find out whether you have assimilated non-violence with all its implications. The principal purpose of my visit was to find out whether all that I had heard from Khan Saheb

about the Khudai Khidmatgars was true, and I am very sorry that I could not give all the time that was needed in order to find out the truth. But, the conviction that I am carrying back with me, namely, the wonderful and the affectionate allegiance of the people to Khan Saheb as their general, and not only the Khudai Khidmatgars, but I noticed, wherever I went, that every man, woman and child knew him and loved him. They greeted him most familiarly. His touch seemed to soothe them. Khan Saheb was most gentle to whoever approached him. The obedience of the Khudai Khidmatgars was unquestioned. All this has filled me with boundless joy. A general merits such obedience. But Khan Saheb has it by right of love, unlike the ordinary general who exacts obedience through fear. The question now is what use will Khan Saheb make of the tremendous power of which he finds himself in possession? I cannot answer the question now. Nor can Khan Saheb. Hence it is that, if God wills it, I should like to re-visit this wonderful province about October, make prolonged stay, and study in detail the working of non-violence."

A remarkable feature of all the addresses presented to Gandhi was the emphasis on non-violence. In the Mardan Congress Committee address it was said: "We assure you that we can never forget the debt we owe to you for having stood with us in our stricken plight. The recognition of that debt will endure so long as there is one Pathan child living in this land. We are ignorant, we are poor, but we lack nothing inasmuch as you have taught us the lesson of non-violence, to observe which we regard as our duty, and whose benefits we have seen with our own eyes." A Peshawar address said: "No one has so influenced the minds of the millions of the Frontier Pathans as you have." And the address at Kalukhan was an exposition of the meaning of non-violence: "The non-violence you have taught us is capable of preparing us for the highest revolution. It inspires true courage and bravery, it robs one of the fear of man, it makes men humble and God-fearing, and above all it enables us to solve our problems, especially that of the communal troubles and poverty and unemployment. It will help everyone to earn an honest livelihood."

Gandhi addressed himself exclusively to non-violence at Charsadda and continued expounding it at the public meetings that he addressed subsequently. At Charsadda the meeting was wonderfully quiet, over ten thousand people sitting in an orderly manner at 10 o'clock in the night. There he said:

"I really wanted to make the acquaintance of those about whom I had heard so much. I wanted to see with my own eyes how the Khudai Khidmatgars live, move and work. Khan Saheb was also keen that I

must see all these and testify to what extent they had assimilated non-violence. That examination, I am afraid, cannot be carried out during this brief tour. But let me tell you that my desire to live in your midst has increased. Tonight, I am thankful that I have been able even to come to Utmanzai and Charsadda and see you all. Khan Saheb and Dr. Khan Sahib, I had seen much of even in Wardha, but I wanted to see you and make your acquaintance. A great responsibility rests on you and Khan Saheb's shoulders. You have deliberately chosen a name that carries mighty implications. You might have called yourselves servants of the people or of the Pathans or of Islam, but you chose instead the name Khudai Khidmatgars, servants of God, that is, servants of humanity, which includes Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Punjab, Gujarat and the other parts of India and also other parts of the world. This very ambitious title implies the acceptance of non-violence. How can a man in the name of God serve humanity by means of the sword? It can be only done by means of a force that God has given us and which is superior to any other force that we can think of. If you do not understand this, you may be sure that the world will laugh at Khan Saheb and me as vain hypocrites. Whilst, therefore, I am delighted at the sight of the Khudai Khidmatgars, I am also seized with a kind of fright. Many people have warned me against you, but that warning does not matter if you are true to your creed. Remember that you outnumber volunteers in the whole of India and that you are more disciplined than the volunteers in the other parts of India. But unless the discipline is rooted in non-violence, the discipline might prove a source of infinite mischief. I have rarely in my tours seen more orderly and quieter meetings. I congratulate you and express my gratefulness for all the affection that you have showered on me. I shall conclude with the prayer that the Frontier Pathans may not make only India free, but teach the world, through an India made non-violently free, the priceless lesson of non-violence."

At Mardan some of the happenings gave him an opportunity of driving the lesson home in a more direct way: "If what you have told me is a solemn promise and if you can keep it, you may be sure that we will win not only the freedom of India but something more. When we can be ready to sacrifice any number of men in the cause of non-violence, we can easily bid fair to be spared the ghastly spectre of war that is now threatening Europe. We talk of doing everything in the name of God, we call ourselves Khudai Khidmatgars, we profess to have given up the sword, and yet we have not put the sword and the dagger out of our hearts, we are sure to be disgraced and the name of Khudai Khidmatgars will be a term of reproach."

He then referred to the incident at Mayar, where three Sikhs were

killed by the Pathans: "I have not yet recovered from the shock of the story that I heard this afternoon. So far as I know the victims had done nothing to provoke the ire of the assassins. The assassins did the deed in broad daylight and bolted away without anyone trying to apprehend them. It is worth pondering over how such a thing could happen when we are all talking of non-violence. There were in the village Khudai Khidmatgars and others believing in the creed of non-violence. It was their duty to catch the culprits. It is their duty to prevent the recurrence of the deed. It is also your duty to befriend the bereaved and to assure the fear-stricken of your sympathy and succour. So long as things of this kind continue to happen in our midst, our non-violence must certainly be in doubt."

His speech at Kalukhan summed up the message of non-violence:

"Let me tell you that I should not have been able to sum up better characteristics of a non-violent man. But let me tell you what you have not said in your address, and that is the implication of non-violence. You must have heard of the riots in Allahabad and Lucknow. These would be impossible if there was really non-violence among us. There are thousands of members on the Congress register. If they were really non-violent, these riots should not have occurred. But we not only failed to prevent them but even sought the aid of the military and the police to quell them. Some of our Congressmen argued with me that our non-violence was limited to our dealings with the Englishmen. Then I say that that non-violence was not the weapon of the strong but of the weak. Active non-violence of the brave puts to flight thieves, decoits and murderers, and prepares an army of volunteers ready to sacrifice themselves in quelling riots, in extinguishing fires and feuds, and so on. You have stated that non-violence automatically solves unemployment. You are right, for it rules out exploitation. The non-violent man automatically becomes a servant of God. He should be ready to render account to God of every minute of his time. May you all be true servants of God and true practisers of non-violence."

On May 8, the Frontier tour ended and Gandhi proceeded to Bombay to take rest at Juhu.

Second Visit

1938

In the third week of May the Congress Working Committee was held in Bombay. The chief ministers of the Congress provinces were present by special invitation. They discussed civil liberty, agrarian policy and labour, rural uplift and education. The complaints against the Congress ministries were scrutinized. Gandhi was resting at Juhu and he was consulted by the Working Committee members on every important issue. The committee meeting over, President Subhas Bose, accompanied by Gandhi, resumed discussion with Jinnah. In the course of talks Jinnah insisted that the preamble was to state clearly that the Congress on behalf of the Hindus entered into an agreement with the League representing the Muslims. In June the Muslim League presented eleven demands, one of them being the recognition of the Muslim League as the one and only authoritative and representative organization of Indian Muslims. The talks reached a deadlock.

From Juhu Gandhi went back to Wardha. His health was unsatisfactory. After long consultations with Abdul Ghaffar, Gandhi set out from Sevagram, towards the end of September 1938, on a month's tour of the Frontier Province. On the way he halted at Delhi to attend a session of the Working Committee, which had met under the shadow of the war cloud that threatened to burst over Europe on the issue of Czechoslovakia. While observing silence, Gandhi actively participated in the deliberations that lasted for eleven days. In the meanwhile, the cloud had lifted and the Munich Pact was signed on September 30—an opportune occasion for Gandhi to reiterate his views on war. "If the Congress could put the whole of its creed of non-violence into practice, India's name would become immortal," he stressed. "For me, even if I have to stand alone, there is no participation in the war even if the Government should surrender the whole control to the Congress."

On October 4, Gandhi left for the Frontier Province. From Peshawar he wrote to Sardar Patel: "I am having a good time. Even you have not succeeded in giving me such complete rest. The weather is fine. At present Khan Saheb lives to look after me." To Mirabehn he wrote from Utmanzai: "I have anticipated you all. For I have plunged into the European waters. You will give your reaction to the articles, for I have written another."

In the article, "If I were a Czech", dated Peshawar, October 6,

1938, in which he characterized the Anglo-French arrangement with Hitler "a peace without honour", Gandhi wrote:

"I want to say to the Czechs and through them to all those nationalities which are called 'small' or 'weak' . . . that the small nations must either come or be ready to come under the protection of the dictators or be a constant menace to the peace of Europe. In spite of all the goodwill in the world England and France cannot save them . . . If I were a Czech, therefore, I would free these two nations from the obligations to defend my country. And yet, I would not be a vassal to any nation or body. To seek to win in a clash of arms would be pure bravado. Not so, if in defying the might of one who would deprive me of my independence, I refuse to obey his will and perish unarmed in the attempt. In so doing, though I lose the body, I save my soul, that is, my honour . . .

" 'But,' says a comforter, 'Hitler knows no pity, your spiritual effort will avail nothing before him.'

"My answer is, 'You may be right . . . If Hitler is unaffected by my suffering, it does not matter. For I shall have lost nothing worth while. My honour is the only thing worth preserving. That is independent of Hitler's pity. But, as a believer in non-violence, I may not limit its possibilities. Hitherto he and his like have built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force. Unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul I have.'

"But, says another comforter, 'What you say is all right for you. But how do you expect your people to respond to the novel call? They are trained to fight . . .'

"You may be right. But I have a call I must answer. When I launched out on satyagraha in South Africa, I had no companion . . . But the honour of the nation was saved. A more apposite instance is that of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Servant of God as he calls himself, the Pride of Afghan as the Pathans delight to call him. He is sitting in front of me as I pen these lines. He has made several thousands of his people throw down their arms. He thinks he has imbibed the lesson of non-violence. He is not sure of his people . . .

"I have come to the Frontier Province, or rather he has brought me to see with my own eyes what his men are doing. I can say in advance and at once that these men know very little of non-violence. All the treasure they have on earth is their faith in their leader. I do not cite these soldiers of peace as at all a finished illustration. I cite them as an

honest attempt being made by a soldier to convert the fellow-soldiers to the ways of peace. I can testify that it is an honest attempt, and whether in the end it succeeds or fails, it will have its lessons for satyagrahis of the future. My purpose will be fulfilled if I succeed in reaching these men's hearts and making them see that if their non-violence does not make them feel much braver than the possession of arms and ability to use them they must give up their non-violence, which is another name for cowardice, and resume their arms which there is nothing but their own will to prevent them from taking back . . . There is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great, and that without bitterness of spirit and in the fullness of faith that the spirit alone lives, nothing else does."

Thanks to the unfailing care of Abdul Ghaffar and Dr. Khan Sahib, Gandhi's health improved in the bracing climate of the Frontier and he was left free to follow his regime of almost unbroken silence. There were no public functions, no interviews and practically no conversation even by written slips of paper. Abdul Ghaffar brought him away from Peshawar on the 9th October to his residence at Utmanzai.

In the midst of a pastoral landscape, on the bank of the Swat river, lies the Utmanzai village. For miles together on all sides there is an unbroken stretch of dark green fields of maize, sugar-cane, legumes and cotton, interspersed with the fruit gardens which grow excellent oranges and peaches, plums, grapes, apricots and pears. The soil is rich and the water plentiful. On the edge of the village there is a picturesque water-mill. The houses in the village, even of the aristocracy, are mostly of mud, with thick adobe walls and heavily timbered roofing which keep them cool in the hot weather and warm in winter. Some of these houses are still built in the old Pathan style with the *hujra* in front, the stables next, and the residential quarters right at the back. Utmanzai has fine roads, but has no proper drainage system. The principal drain meanders sluggishly through the streets.

Being anxious for Gandhi's safety, Abdul Ghaffar posted on the roof of his residence Khudai Khidmatgars to keep watch during the night. Before posting them he had a talk with Gandhi, without mentioning his plan. He simply asked Gandhi if he objected to policing. He nodded. Abdul Ghaffar understood it as consent for the posting of armed night-watches. When, however, Gandhi came to know of them, he objected and said that whilst he would tolerate policing for the others, he could not tolerate the armed guards for his own protection. It would be quite contrary to the practice of a lifetime. Abdul Ghaffar had thought, since the arms were meant only to scare away the possible mischief-mongers and were intended never to be used, Gandhi probably would have no

valid objection to their retention. Gandhi pointed out the fallacy in his argument by a parable. The Lord God once sent for the serpent and told him that He would take away his fangs. "All right," replied the serpent, "but let me retain my hiss." "You may do so," warned the Lord God, "but remember, Adam's children will in that event exterminate you and your kind." "The moral," remarked Gandhi, "is that show of force is also a species of violence and brings upon the user the same retribution as violence itself, indeed it is worse." Abdul Ghaffar appreciated Gandhi's objection. The guards were removed, but Abdul Ghaffar insisted on the unarmed night-watches, to which Gandhi submitted reluctantly.

To Gandhi's mind the incident seemed to be symbolic of another and far bigger issue that confronted the country. Just as the satyagrahi must renounce the use of arms for self-protection, even so, if India was ever to attain non-violent swaraj, India must first be able to defend herself against the trans-border raids without the help of the police and the military. Here in the North-West Frontier Province there were said to be over a hundred thousand Khudai Khidmatgars pledged to the creed of non-violence. If they had really assimilated the principle of non-violence, if their non-violence was the true non-violence of the brave and not a mere expedient or a lip-profession, they ought to be able to befriend the trans-border raiders by their loving service and to wean them from their raiding habit. Indeed, they could win independence for India and set an example to the whole world.

He opened out his heart in the course of a talk with Abdul Ghaffar: "The conviction is growing upon me that unless we can develop the capacity to stop these Frontier raids without the help of the police and the military, it is no use the Congress retaining power in this province. For, in that case, our strength will continue to ebb away and we are bound to be defeated in the end. A wise general never waits till he is beaten. He withdraws in time from a position which he knows he would not be able to hold."

"For years," Gandhi continued, "ever since we met each other, it has been a pet dream of mine to visit the tribal areas, go right up to Kabul, mix with the trans-border tribes and try to understand their psychology. Why should we not go forth together, present to them our viewpoint and establish with the tribesmen a bond of friendship and sympathy? I am certain that the only way of bringing about a permanent settlement of the Frontier problem is through the way of peace and reason. If our Khudai Khidmatgar organization is what its name signifies and what it ought to be, I am sure that we can achieve that feat today. Therefore, I am anxious to find to what extent the Khudai Khidmatgars have

understood and assimilated the spirit of non-violence, and where they stand, and what your and my future line of action should be.

"In South Africa a small band of 13,000 satyagrahi countrymen were able to hold their own against the might of the Union Government. General Smuts could not turn them out as he had the 50,000 Chinese, who were driven out bag and baggage in less than six months and that without compensation. He would not have hesitated to crush us if we had strayed from the path of non-violence. What could not an army of one hundred thousand Khudai Khidmatgars, trained in the use of non-violent method, achieve?"

Addressing the officers of the Khudai Khidmatgars next he proceeded: "We are lucky in having a true, honest, God-fearing man like Badshah Khan in our midst here. To his credit stands the miracle of making the thousands of Pathans renounce their arms. No one can say what the future will reveal. May be that all Khudai Khidmatgars may not prove to be true servants of God as their name implies. But, making due allowance for that, still what has been achieved is nothing short of the marvellous. What I shall expect of you is that even if some one subjects you to the most inhuman tortures, you will joyfully face the ordeal and make the supreme sacrifice with God's name on your lips and without a trace of fear or anger or any thought of revenge in your hearts. That will be heroism of the highest type. To fight with the sword does call for bravery of a sort. But to die is braver far than to kill. He alone is truly brave, he alone is martyr in the true sense who dies without fear in his heart and without wishing hurt to his enemy, not the one who kills and dies. If our country, even in its present fallen condition, can exhibit this type of bravery, what a beacon light will it be for Europe with all its discipline, science and organization! If Europe but realized that heroic as it undoubtedly is for a handful of people to offer armed resistance in the face of the superior members, it is far more heroic to stand up against overwhelming numbers without any arms at all, it would save itself and blaze a trail for the world."

He told Abdul Ghaffar that he would like to have a heart-to-heart talk with as many Khudai Khidmatgars as possible, so that he might be able to understand them thoroughly and they, him. Accordingly, Gandhi met thirteen officers of the Charsadda tahsil on two successive days at Utmanzai, and another group at Peshawar. At both the places, in reply to his questions, they assured him that their adherence to the principle of non-violence was absolute. They went so far as to declare that even if the impossible happened and, as Gandhi had postulated to them, if Abdul Ghaffar had turned away from the path of non-violence, they would not give up their faith in non-violence.

Gandhi told them that though it sounded to him an overbold statement for them to make, still, as was his wont, he would take them at their word. He explained to them in detail what his conception of the nature and the implications of non-violence was. It was comparatively easy to maintain a passive sort of non-violence when the opponent was powerful and fully armed. But would they remain non-violent in their dealings among themselves and also with their own countrymen, where there was no extraneous force to restrain or check them? Again, was theirs the non-violence of the strong or that of the weak? If theirs was the non-violence of the strong, they should feel the stronger for their renunciation of the sword. But if that was not the case, it was better for them to resume their weapons which they had of their own free will discarded. For it was much better for them to be brave soldiers in arms than to be disarmed and cowardly.

"A charge has often been levelled against me and Badshah Khan," he remarked, "that we are rendering India and Islam a disservice by presenting the gospel of non-violence to the brave and warlike people of the Frontier. They say that I have come here to sap your strength. The Frontier Province, they say, is the bastion of Islam in India, the Pathans are past masters in the use of the sword and the rifle and mine is an attempt to emasculate them by making them renouce their arms and thus undermine the citadel of the strength and security of Islam. I wholly repudiate the charge. My faith is that by adopting the doctrine of non-violence in its entirety, you will indeed be rendering a lasting service to India and to Islam which, just now, it seems to me, is in danger. If you have understood the power of non-violence, you ought to feel the stronger for having put away your arms. Yours will be the spiritual strength with which you can not only protect Islam but even the other religions. If, however, you have not understood the secret of this strength, if, as a result of renouncing arms, you feel weak instead of stronger than before, it would be better, for you to give up the profession of non-violence. I cannot bear to see even a single Pathan turn weak or cowardly under my influence. Rather than that, I would that you returned to your arms with a vengeance.

"Today, the Sikhs say that if they give up the *kirpan*, they give up everything. They seem to have made the *kirpan* into their religion. By discarding it, they think, they will become weak and cowardly. I tell them that it is an idle fear, and I am here to tell you the same. I have read the Koran with as much care and reverence as I have read the Gita. I have read other important books on Islam too. I claim to have as much regard in my heart for Islam and the other religions as for my own, and I dare say with all the emphasis that I can command that

though the sword has been wielded in the history of Islam and that too in the name of religion, Islam was not founded by the sword, nor was it spread due to it. Similarly, in Christianity the sword has been freely used. But then the spread of Christianity was not due to its use. On the contrary, the use of the sword has only tarnished its fair name. Millions in Europe swear by Christianity. But contrary to the teachings of Jesus, they are engaged in a fratricidal orgy of bloodshed and murder, which is a negation of true Christianity. If you can assimilate what I have been telling you, your influence will travel far and beyond your borders and you will show the way to Europe.

"Today, a force of 17,000 British soldiers is able to rule over us, because they have behind them the power of the British Government. If the Khudai Khidmatgars really felt within themselves the upsurge of soul force as a sequel to their renouncing arms, not even 17,000 would be needed to win India her independence, because they shall have the strength of God behind them. As against it, if one million of them professed non-violence while the violence was lurking in their hearts, then they would count as nothing. You should renounce the sword, because you have realized that it is the symbol not of your strength but of your weakness, because it does not make for true bravery. But if you put away your sword outwardly but there is the sword in your hearts, you shall have begun the wrong way and your renunciation will be devoid of any merit. It may prove even dangerous."

"What is the meaning of eradicating violence from one's heart?" he inquired and explained that it meant not merely the ability to control one's anger, but its complete eradication from the heart. "If a dacoit inspires anger or fear in my heart, it means that I have not purged myself of violence. To realize non-violence means, to feel within you its strength, otherwise known as soul force, to know God. A person who has known God will be incapable of feeling or harbouring anger or fear within him, no matter how overpowering the cause for it may be."

A Khudai Khidmatgar, he observed, had first to be a man of God, a servant of humanity. It would demand of him purity in deed, word and thought, and ceaseless, honest industry, since purity of mind and idleness are incompatible. They should, therefore, learn some handicraft which they could practise in their homes. This should preferably be ginning and spinning and weaving, as these alone could be offered to millions and in their own homes. "A person who renounces the sword, dare not remain idle for a single minute. An idle man's brain, as the popular proverb says, is the devil's workshop. Idleness corrodes the soul and intellect. A person who has renounced violence will take the name of God with every breath and do his work all the twenty-four hours.

"Moreover, every Khudai Khidmatgar must have an independent means of livelihood. Today many of you have land, but your land can be taken away from you, but not your craft or manual skill. It is true that God provides to His servant his daily bread, but only if he performs bread labour. If you work not, neither shall you eat is nature's law and should be yours too. You have adopted red shirts as your uniform. I had hoped you would have adopted khadi too which is the livery of freedom. But I see very few among you wear khadi. The reason, perhaps, is that you have to provide your own uniform and khadi is dearer. That would not be so if you spin for yourself."

They should further, he told them, learn Hindustani, as that would enable them to cultivate and enlarge their minds and bring them in close touch with the wider world. It was up to them also to learn the rudiments of the science of sanitation and first-aid, and last but not least, they should cultivate the attitude of equal respect and reverence towards all religions. "It is not wearing the red shirt that makes one a Khudai Khidmatgar," he concluded, "nor standing in serried ranks, but to feel within you the strength of God, which is the opposite of the strength of arms. You have, indeed, so far only arrived at the portal of non-violence. Still you have been able to achieve so much. How much greater your achievement will be when you have fully entered its holy edifice! But as I have said before, all that requires previous preparation and training. At present you lack both."

A dialogue between Abdul Ghaffar and Gandhi followed.

Abdul Ghaffar: There are some Pathans in the villages here, who persecute Khudai Khidmatgars beyond endurance. They beat them, seize their lands and so on. What are we to do against them?

Gandhi: We have to meet their high-handedness with patience and forbearance. We have to meet their atrocities in the same manner as we used to meet the Britishers'—not answer violence by violence, not abuse by abuse, nor harbour anger in our hearts. If we do that, it is sure to melt their hearts. If it fails, we shall non-co-operate. If they seize lands, we shall refuse to provide them the labour even though we may have to starve. We shall brave their wrath, but refuse to submit or go against our conscience.

Abdul Ghaffar: Would it be permissible for us to lodge a complaint against them before the police and get them punished?

Gandhi: A true Khudai Khidmatgar will never go to a law court. Fighting in a law court is just like physical fighting. Only, you use force by proxy. To get the police to punish the aggressor is only a form of revenge, which a Khudai Khidmatgar must abjure. Let me illustrate my meaning by a personal instance. At Sevagram some Harijans came

to me and told me that unless I get a Harijan included in the Central Provinces's ministry, they would offer satyagraha by staging a hunger-strike. I knew it was all the doing of a mischief-maker. The Police Superintendent wanted to post some police force as he was afraid that the hooligans might do some mischief. But I said 'no' to him, and told the Harijans that they need not sit outside in the sun and they could occupy any room they liked in the ashram. I offered to feed them too, if they wanted. They chose my wife's room. I let them occupy it. We looked after their needs, and when one of them fell ill, we nursed him. The result was they became our friends."

On October 15, the period of rest ended and Gandhi set out on a tour of the interior of Mardan and Nowshera. The itinerary was brief and arranged in easy stages. The journey was by van, the propaganda bus which Nehru had donated to the Khudai Khidmatgars being requisitioned for the purpose. As Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar sped along the asphalted road, the entire villages on either side of the road turned out of doors to have their glimpse. They were all silent—such was their discipline. The endearing qualities of the Pathans are their warmth of generosity, dignity of bearing and stoical reserve. Their one weakness is their passion for hospitality, and it may have proved embarrassing to Gandhi. But thanks to Abdul Ghaffar's forethought and his timely appeal, it was kept effectively in check. The only exception was when in the course of a casual outing near Utmanzai, Gandhi had to get out of the van to accept gifts of fruit and sugar-cane and vegetables which the inhabitants of Munat Khan Kili had brought as a token of their hospitality. "We want you to settle in our midst and make our province your home," they said to him. Remarked the leading Khan: "You kept our Badshah in your part of the country under duress for six years. We can keep you as a prisoner of love for at least six months." Little children came forward to shake hands with him, uttering "*tre mash*", "may you never be tired".

On October 16, at Nowshera, Gandhi had a meeting with officers of the Khudai Khidmatgars. They thanked him for having given them the weapon of non-violence which was infinitely superior to the weapons of steel and brass. They assured him that their faith in non-violence was absolute, as had been amply proved by their conduct during the civil disobedience struggle, and they would never go back upon it. In reply, Gandhi said:

"I accept your assurance that you have fully understood the principle of non-violence and you will hold on to it always. I congratulate you on it and I further say that if you can put the whole of that doctrine in practice, you will make history. You claim to have a hundred thousand

Khudai Khidmatgars on your register which, indeed, exceeds the total number of the Congress volunteers as it stands today. You are all pledged to selfless service. You get no monetary allowance and you have even to provide your own uniforms. You are a homogeneous and disciplined body. Khan Saheb's word is law to you. You have proved your capacity to receive the blows without retaliation. But this is only the first step in your probation, not the last. To gain India's freedom, the capacity for suffering must go hand in hand with the capacity for ceaseless labour. A soldier for freedom must essentially work for the benefit of all.

"The resemblance between you and the ordinary soldier begins and ends with the cut of the uniform and, perhaps, the nomenclatures of the ranks which you have adopted. Like the military, you have your colonels and G.O.C.'s. But unlike them the basis of all your activity is not violence but non-violence. Therefore, your training and your pre-occupations, your mode of working, even your thoughts and aspirations must necessarily be different from theirs. A soldier in arms is trained to kill. Even his dreams are about killing. He dreams of fighting, of winning fame and advancement in the battlefield by the prowess of his arms. He has reduced killing to an art. When he is not engaged in fighting he occupies himself with eating, drinking, swearing and making merry in the way he knows. A satyagrahi, a Khudai Khidmatgar, on the other hand, would always long for an opportunity for silent service. All his time would be given to labour of love. If he dreams, it will not be about killing but about laying down his life to serve others. He has reduced dying innocently and for his fellow-men to an art."

"But what shall be the training that will fit you out for this sort of work?" he next asked and replied that it must be training in various branches of constructive work. With one hundred thousand Khudai Khidmatgars trained in the science of constructive non-violence, the trans-border raids should become a thing of the past. "You should consider it a matter of utter shame, if a single theft and dacoity takes place in your midst. Even the thieves and the trans-border raiders are human beings. They commit crime not for the love of the thing itself, but because they are driven to it largely by necessity and want. They know no better. The only method of dealing with them that has been adopted so far is that of force. They are given no quarter and they give none. Dr. Khan Sahib feels helpless against them because the Government has no other way of dealing with them. But you can make a non-violent approach to the problem, and I am sure you will succeed where the Government has failed. You can teach them to live honestly like yourselves by providing them with cottage occupations. You can go in their midst, serve them in their homes and explain to them the things

in a loving and sympathetic manner, and you will find that they are not unamenable to the argument of love. There are two ways open to you today—the way of brute force that has already been tried and found wanting, and the way of peace. You seem to have made your choice. May you prove equal to it!"

The halt at Nowshera was only for a couple of hours. He reached Hoti Mardan, headquarters of the Mardan district, at evening. Like Nowshera it is a cantonment town and owes its strategic importance to the fact that it is the centre of traffic for the tribes inhabiting the adjoining territories of Swat, Buner, Bajaur and Dir.

In reply to his usual question, one of the Khudai Khidmatgars said that they could put up with every kind of provocation except the abuse of their revered leaders. Gandhi told them that non-violence could not, like the curate's egg, be accepted or rejected in part. It had value only when it was practised in its entirety. "When the sun rises the whole world is filled with its warmth, so that even a blind man feels its presence. Similarly, when one hundred thousand of Khudai Khidmatgars are fully permeated with the spirit of non-violence, it will proclaim itself and everybody will feel its life-giving breath."

He told them of the close relations that existed between him and the Pathans in South Africa and remarked: "I know it is difficult, it is no joke for a Pathan to take an affront lying low." The sign by which he would judge whether the Khudai Khidmatgars had really assimilated the spirit of non-violence would be that they should have won the hearts of all, including the lowliest and the most helpless, through their loving and selfless service and be able to command their co-operation and obedience not through fear but love. "I have known the Pathans since my South African days. I had the privilege of coming into a very intimate contact with them. Some of them were my clients. They treated me as their friend, philosopher and guide, in whom they could confide freely. They would even come and confess to me their secret crimes. They were a rough and ready lot. Past masters in the art of wielding the lathi, inflammable, the first to take part in riots, they held life cheap and would have killed a human being with no more thought than they would kill a sheep or a hen. That such men should, at the bidding of one man, have laid down their arms and accepted non-violence as the superior weapon sounds almost like a fairy tale. If the one lakh Khudai Khidmatgars became truly non-violent in letter and in spirit and shed their violent past completely, as a snake does its outworn skin, it would be nothing short of a miracle. That is why in spite of the assurance of your faith in non-violence that you have given me, I am forced to be cautious and preface my remarks with an 'if'. My diffidence is only a measure of the

difficulty of the task. But nothing is too difficult for the brave, and I know the Pathans are brave."

He then went on to describe the signs by which he would judge their non-violence: "Have you befriended and won the confidence of each and all in your locality? Do the people regard you with love or with fear? So long as a single individual is afraid of you, you are no true Khudai Khidmatgar. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be gentle in his speech and manner, the light of purity will shine forth from his eyes, so that even a stranger, woman or even a child would instinctively feel that here was a friend, a man of God, who could be implicitly trusted. A Khudai Khidmatgar will command the co-operation of all the sections of the community, not the sort of obedience that a Mussolini or a Hitler can command through his unlimited power of coercion, but the willing and spontaneous obedience which is yielded to love alone. This power can be acquired only through ceaseless and loving service and waiting upon God. When I find that under your influence people are gradually giving up their insanitary habits, the drunkard is being weaned from drink and the criminal from crime and the Khudai Khidmatgars are welcomed everywhere by the people as their natural protectors and friends in need, I shall know that, at least, we have got in our midst a body of men who have really assimilated the spirit of non-violence and the hour of India's deliverance is close at hand."

At Swabi tahsil, one of the strongholds of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, Gandhi spoke on courting imprisonment. He warned them that if they could not bear insults and indignities in jail without anger in their hearts, it would be far better for them to give up the Khudai Khidmatgar's uniform. They had proved their mettle by marching to jail in their hundreds and thousands. But that was not enough. Mere filling of the jails would not bring India freedom. "Even the thieves and the criminals go to prison, but their prison-going has no merit. It is the suffering of the pure and innocent that tells. It is only when the authorities find that the only place where they can keep the purest and most innocent citizens is prison that a change of heart is forced upon them. A satyagrahi goes to prison not to embarrass the jail authorities, but to convert them by giving to them an experience of his innocence. You all should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison which the law of satyagraha demands, your jail-going will be useless and it will bring you only disappointment at the end. A votary of non-violence must have the capacity to put up with the indignities and hardships of the prison-life not only without retaliation and anger but with pity in his heart for the perpetrators of those hardships and indignities. I would, therefore, today ask you to examine yoursleves in the

light of my remarks and if you find that you cannot or do not want to go to the full length, to drop your badge of non-violence and request Badshah Khan to release you from your pledge. That will be a species of heroism. But if you have full faith in the creed of non-violence as I have described it, then know it from me that God will arm you with the required strength in your hour of trial."

At the end of the speech, in answer to Abdul Ghaffar's question, the Khudai Khidmatgars said: "We admit that we fall short of Mahatmaji's standard of non-violence. We have not been able to banish anger from our hearts. We often lose our temper. All we can say is that we feel our shortcomings and that we will sincerely strive to overcome them and reach the ideal that has been placed before us."

Throughout these talks Abdul Ghaffar acted as interpreter in simple, forceful Pakhtu and added: "I know it is difficult to curb one's anger altogether. But you have pledged yourself to it before God. Man is by nature weak, but God is all powerful. By yourselves you may fail in your efforts to be completely non-violent, but God helping, you will succeed. It may not be all at once. But each effort will take you a step higher on your path. Do not lose heart."

After three days' tour Gandhi returned to Utmanzai for taking rest and attending to *Harijan*. In his quiet retreat, he devoted two days to compare notes with Abdul Ghaffar about the impressions of the tour. Abdul Ghaffar said: "My impression is that as they themselves admitted before us, they are raw recruits and fall short of the standard. There is violence in their hearts, which they have not been able altogether to cast out. They have their defects of temper. But there is no doubt as to their sincerity. Given a chance they can be hammered into shape, and I think the attempt is worth while."

Abdul Ghaffar was dreadfully in earnest. "Mahatmaji, this land, so rich in fruit and grain, might well have been a smiling little Eden upon this earth, but it has today fallen under a blight. My conviction is daily growing deeper that more than anything else, violence has been the real bane of us Pathans in this province. It shattered our solidarity and tore us with wretched internal feuds. The entire strength of the Pathan is today spent in thinking how to cut the throat of his brother. To what fruitful use this energy might not be put if only we could be rid of this curse! Whatever may be the case with the other provinces, I am firmly convinced that as far as the Frontier Province is concerned, the non-violent movement is the greatest boon that God has sent us. There is no other way of salvation for the Pathans except through non-violence. I say this from experience of the miraculous transformation that even the little measure of non-violence that we have attained has wrought

in our midst. We used to be so timid and indolent. The sight of an Englishman would frighten us. We thought nothing of wasting our time in idleness. Your movement has instilled fresh life into us and made us more industrious, so that a piece of land that formerly used to yield hardly ten-rupeeworth of produce, now produces double that amount. We have shed our fear and are no longer afraid of an Englishman or, for the matter of that, of any man."

And he gave an instance of how during the civil disobedience days once an English officer accompanied by a body of soldiers had ordered dispersal of a procession of Khudai Khidmatgars. He had a prohibitory order under section 144 in his pocket but would not show it, as he was out to bully. He tried to snatch away the national flag which a Red Shirt, heading the procession, carried in his hand. But the latter would not surrender it, whereupon he grew wild and shouted the order "fire" to his soldiers. But he was flabbergasted by the calm determination of the Red Shirts who stood fast where they were, ready to face the bullets. He had not the courage to proceed further. "Mahatmaji, you should have seen his condition. He could hardly speak. I tried to set him at ease by telling him that unarmed as we were, he had nothing to fear from us, and that if he had only produced the prohibitory order at the outset, instead of trying to bear us down by arrogance and stupidity, issuing the order to open fire, we would have gladly dispersed, as it was not our intention to break orders. He felt thoroughly crestfallen and ashamed. Englishmen are afraid of our non-violence. A non-violent Pathan, they say, is more dangerous than a violent Pathan."

"If we could assimilate and put into practice the whole of the doctrine of non-violence as you have explained it to us," Abdul Ghaffar went on, "how much stronger and better off we should be! We were on brink of utter ruination. But God in His mercy sent us the non-violence movement to save us in our extremity. I tell my people: 'What is the use of your shouting empty slogans about swaraj? You have already got your swaraj if you have learnt to shed all fear and to earn an honest, independent living through manual work, as shown by Mahatmaji.' "

Gandhi suggested to Abdul Ghaffar that if non-violence was to receive a fair trial, the Khudai Khidmatgars must go through a rigorous course of training in constructive non-violence. Abdul Ghaffar had already decided to establish a training-centre and a home for the Khudai Khidmatgars in the village of Marwandi near Utmanzai. In addition to it, it was decided to start a spinning and weaving centre in Utmanzai itself, where the people at large, who were not necessarily the Khudai Khidmatgars, would learn the civilizing arts of spinning and weaving and the allied processes. "My idea, Mahatmaji," he explained, "is to

make Utmanzai into a model village. The spinning and weaving centre will serve as a sort of permanent exhibition for the education of villagers. At the home for the Khudai Khidmatgars, we shall set before us the self-sufficiency ideal. We shall wear only the clothes that we ourselves produce, eat only such fruits and vegetables as we raise there, and set up a small dairy to provide us with milk. We shall deny ourselves what we cannot ourselves produce."

Gandhi remarked: "May I further suggest that the Khudai Khidmatgars should take their due share in the building of the huts too that are to house them!"

"That is our idea, too," said Abdul Ghaffar.

To train properly the pioneer batch of workers, Gandhi suggested that some Khudai Khidmatgars might be sent to Wardha, where, besides becoming adepts in the science of khadi, they would also get a grounding in first-aid and hygiene, sanitation and village uplift work, and in Hindustani. They would also be initiated there into Basic Education, so that, on their return, they would be able to take up the work of mass education. "But your work will not make headway unless you take the lead and yourself become an adept in all these things."

"Lastly," said Gandhi, "your work will come to nought unless you enforce the rule of punctuality in your retreat. There must be a fixed routine and fixed hours for rising and going to bed, for taking meals and for work and rest, and they must be rigorously enforced. I attach the greatest importance to punctuality. Indeed, it is a corollary to non-violence."

They next proceeded to discuss how the Khudai Khidmatgars would fulfil their mission of coping with the trans-border raids. Abdul Ghaffar was of the opinion that the task was rendered infinitely difficult by the presence of the police and the military, who were not fully under the popular control and whose presence there brought in all the evils of a double rule. "Either the authorities should whole-heartedly co-operate with us or they should withdraw the police and the military from one district to begin with, and we shall then undertake to maintain peace of that district through our Khudai Khidmatgars."

But, Gandhi differed: "I frankly confess that I do not expect the authorities whole-heartedly to co-operate with us. They would distrust our ability, if not our motive. It is too much to expect them to withdraw the police on trust. Non-violence is a universal principle and its operation is not limited by a hostile environment. Indeed, its efficacy can be tested only when it acts in the midst of and in spite of the opposition. Our non-violence would, indeed, be a hollow thing and nothing worth, if it depended for its success on the goodwill of the authorities. We can

establish full control over the people, and we shall render the police and the military innocuous." And he described to him how during the Bombay riots on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit, the police and the military found their job gone because the Congress immediately regained control and peace was restored.

Abdul Ghaffar intervened: "But the difficulty is that the raiders are mostly bad characters who have absconded from British India and we cannot make contact with them because the authorities will not permit us or our workers to go into the tribal territory."

Gandhi explained: "They must, and I tell you, they will, when we are fully ready. But then, for that we shall need to have a body of Khudai Khidmatgars who are really and truly the servants of God, with whom non-violence is a living faith. Non-violence is an active principle of the highest order. It is soul force or the power of Godhead within us. The imperfect man cannot grasp the whole of that Essence—he would not be able to bear its full blaze—but even an infinitesimal fraction of it, when it becomes active within us, can work wonders. The sun in the heavens fills the whole universe with its life-giving warmth. But if one went too near it, it would consume him to ashes. Even so, it is with the Godhead. We become Godlike to the extent we realize non-violence; but we can never become wholly God. Non-violence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it embedded in a malignant growth, acts continuously, silently and ceaselessly, till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly, even a tiny grain of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle and unseen way, and leavens the whole society.

"It is self-acting. The soul persists even after death. Its existence does not depend on the physical body. Similarly, non-violence or soul force, too, does not need the physical aids for its propagation or effect. It acts independently of them. It transcends time and space.

"And it follows, therefore, that if non-violence becomes successfully established in one place, its influence will spread everywhere. So long as a single dacoity takes place in Utmanzai, I shall say that our non-violence is not genuine.

"The basic principle on which the practice of non-violence rests is that what holds good in respect of yourself, holds good equally in respect of the whole universe. All mankind in essence is alike. What is, therefore, possible for me, is also possible for everybody. Pursuing further this line of reasoning, I came to the conclusion that if I could find a non-violent solution of the various problems that arise in one particular village, then the lesson learnt from it would enable me to tackle in a non-violent manner all similar problems in India.

"And so I decided to settle down in Sevagram. My sojourn in Sevagram has been an education for me. My experience with the Harijans has provided me with what I regard as an ideal solution for the Hindu-Muslim problem, which does away with all pacts. And so if you can set things right in Utmanzai, your whole problem would be solved. Even our relations with the English will be transformed and purified if we can show to them that we really do not stand in need of the protection for which their police and the army are ostensibly kept."

But Abdul Ghaffar had a doubt. In every village there is an element of self-seekers and exploiters who are ready to go to any length in order to serve their selfish ends. Could one proceed by ignoring them altogether or should an attempt be made to cultivate them too?

"We may ultimately have to leave some of them out," said Gandhi, "but we may not regard anybody as irreclaimable. We should try to understand the psychology of the evil-doer. He is very often a victim of circumstances. By patience and sympathy, we shall be able to win over at least some of them to the side of justice. Moreover, we should not forget that even evil is sustained through co-operation, either willing or forced, of good. Truth alone is self-sustained. In the last resort, we can curb the power of the evil-doers to do mischief by withdrawing all co-operation from them, completely isolating them.

"This, in essence, is the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. It follows, therefore, that it must have its root in love. Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while non-co-operating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend, and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service, whenever possible. And, in fact, it is the acid test of non-violence that a non-violent conflict leaves no rancour behind and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. This was my experience in South Africa with General Smuts. He started by being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today, he is my warmest friend. For eight years we were ranged on opposite sides. But during the second Round Table Conference, it was he who stood by me and, in public as well as in private, gave me his full support. This is only one instance of many that I can quote.

"Times change and systems decay. But it is my faith that in the result it is only non-violence and things that are based on non-violence that will endure. Nineteen hundred years ago Christianity was born. The ministry of Jesus lasted only for three brief years. His teaching was misunderstood even during his own time, and today's Christianity is a denial of his central teaching: 'Love your enemy.' But what are 1,900 years for the spread of the central doctrine of a man's teachings?

"Six centuries rolled by and Islam appeared on the scene. Many Musalmans will not even allow me to say that Islam, as the word implies, is unadulterated peace. My reading of the Koran has convinced me that the basis of Islam is not violence. But here again thirteen hundred years are but a speck in the cycle of time. I am convinced that both these great faiths will live only to the extent to which their followers imbibe the central teaching of non-violence. But it is not a thing to be grasped through mere intellect, it must sink into our hearts."

Golden Bridge

1938

The week following was crowded with a strenuous tour programme in the Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts. The distances to be covered every day grew longer, the motor journey more fatiguing and the crowds noisier and less disciplined as Gandhi moved southwards from the purely Pakhtu-speaking districts of Peshawar and Mardan, called the "Red Shirt districts". To this was added the strain of public meetings. He would have preferred to speak exclusively to the Khudai Khidmatgars, but he had to yield to requests from Abdul Ghaffar who himself would not take rest in spite of his Ramzan fast.

Before proceeding to Kohat, Abdul Ghaffar decided to have with him a batch of Khudai Khidmatgars to accompany Gandhi during the rest of the tour. Kohat district lies in the heart of the Frontier Province. The town and cantonment of Kohat, which occupy the western portion of the Kohat tahsil, are forty miles' drive from Peshawar, part of the road lying through the independent territory of the Kohat Pass Afridis. The Kohat Pass is not so long as the Khyber, but it is more rugged and more inviting for its savage beauty.

Abdul Ghaffar was in raptures over the ravishing beauty of the landscape. All of a sudden he exclaimed, "Look, there is Ajab Khan's home," as he pointed out a neat little mud-hut in the valley below. "Ajab Khan, the abductor of Mollie Ellis, notorious outlaw who paid the penalty for his crimes on a Frontier gallows?" inquired Pyarelal, Gandhi's secretary. Abdul Ghaffar laughed. "Dead! Hanged! Why, he is still alive and settled somewhere on the border of Turkistan. And he was no scoundrel either." He then told the whole story of Ajab Khan as attested to by an eyewitness, who knew all the parties concerned. Abdul Ghaffar believed Ajab Khan to be guiltless. Ajab Khan was a gun-runner. His house was raided by a major of the British army. "You may do whatever else you like," he warned him, "but if you enter the zenana or touch the women folk, there will be a score to settle." The officer laughed and rudely proceeded to unveil the women in the zenana. The outlaw proved as good as his word. He settled the score in the only way known to the Pathans. At the end of the narration Abdul Ghaffar remarked: "And how did Ajab Khan treat Miss Ellis while she was in his custody? Ask anybody, she herself attested to it. No white man in Ajab Khan's place would have respected her honour more."

At Kohat numerous deputations met Gandhi in the course of the day. Whilst assuring them of his sympathy, he said that he would discuss all matters with their Prime Minister at Peshawar. On October 22 Gandhi was presented with an address by the Kohat District Congress Committee on behalf of the citizens. A mass public meeting was held in the evening at an enchanting spot outside the city. Referring to the various representations that he had received, Gandhi said:

"I have given more than an hour today to acquaint myself with your difficulties and woes. But, I confess to you that I am no longer fit to tackle such matters. While on the one hand, old age is slowly creeping upon me, on the other, my responsibilities are becoming more and more multifarious now, and there is the danger that if I have too many irons in the fire, I may not be able to do justice to the more important of my responsibilities. Among those, the responsibility that I have undertaken in respect of the Khudai Khidmatgars is the most important. If I can discharge it to my satisfaction, in collaboration with Badshah Khan, I shall feel that my closing years have not been wasted.

"People laugh at me at the idea of the Khudai Khidmatgars becoming full-fledged non-violent soldiers of swaraj. But their mockery does not affect me. Non-violence is a quality not of the body, but of the soul. Once its central meaning sinks into your being, all the rest follows by itself. Human nature in the Khudai Khidmatgars is not different from mine. And I am sure that if I can practise non-violence to some extent, they and, for that matter, any one can. I, therefore, invite you to pray with me to the Almighty that He may make real my dream about the Khudai Khidmatgars."

In the course of his long talk before the Khudai Khidmatgar officers at Kohat, he impressed upon them the tremendous nature of the step which they had taken. He had often stated before that if the Pathan, famed in the world for the prowess of his arms, really took to non-violence, renouncing arms, it would be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world. "For good or for ill, the Pathan today has come to be regarded as a bogy man by the average person in India today. In Gujarat and Kathiawad children turn pale at the very mention of the Pathan. At the Sabarmati ashram we try to inculcate fearlessness among the children. But I am ashamed to confess that in spite of all our efforts we have not succeeded in making them eradicate the fear of the Pathan from their hearts. I have not been able to impress upon our ashram girls that they have no need to fear a Pathan. They try to make a show of bravery. But it is only a make-believe. During a communal disturbance they dare not stir out of their homes if there is a report of even a casual Pathan being about. They are afraid, they would be kidnapped."

"I tell the girls that even if they are kidnapped they must not be frightened. They should appeal to the kidnapper's sense of honour to behave chivalrously towards one who should be as a sister to him. If in spite of their entreaties he persists in his evil intentions, since all must die some day, they can put an end to their life by biting the tongue but not submit. They answer: 'What you say is right. But it is all new to us. We have not the confidence that at the proper time we shall be able to do what you tell us.' If such is the case with the ashram girls, what must it be with others? When, therefore, I hear that a body of Khudai Khidmatgars has arisen among the Pathans, who have completely renounced violence, I do not know whether to believe it or not."

"What are the implications of renouncing violence and what is the mark of a person who has renounced violence?" he next asked. One did not become a Khudai Khidmatgar by adopting that name or by putting on the Khudai Khidmatgar's uniform, he told them. It needed a systematic training in non-violence. In Europe, where they glorified killing into a noble profession, they spent millions on perfecting the science of destruction. Their best scientists were pressed into its service. Even their educational system was centred on it. They spent stupendous sums too on luxuries and means of physical comforts, which formed a part of their ideal. By contrast, the mark of a man of God or a Khudai Khidmatgar should be purity, industry and unremitting hard labour in the service of God's creation. "In the course of serving your fellow-creatures you will get a measure of the progress you have made in non-violence and of the power that is in non-violence. Armed with this power, a single person can stand against the whole world. That is not possible with the sword."

Hitherto, non-violence had been synonymous with civil breach of laws and taking the penalty for the same non-violently. But he wished to tell them that, although civil disobedience was included in the programme of non-violence, its essence, as he had pointed out at Swabi, was the moral right or fitness which it presupposed in the civil resister and accrued to one who trained himself in the practice of non-violence. In satyagraha fight, civil disobedience is the end, not the beginning. "It is the last step, not the first." People used to have a craven fear of the Government. As a remedy, he had prescribed satyagraha or civil disobedience. But, it was a sharp medicine. "Unless a physician, who administers powerful drugs, knows exactly when to stop, he loses his patient. That is why in April 1934 I promptly called off civil disobedience, confining it to myself alone when the situation demanded it. It was just in time. So, I would like you for the time being, to forget civil disobedience," Gandhi emphasized.

He next proceeded to explain that the service of God could only be performed through service of His creatures. He had made it his habit to try to see always the hand of God in everything even at the risk of being considered superstitious. Thus, he saw the hand of God in the name that Badshah Khan had given them. Badshah Khan had not called them satyagrahis but servants of God.

"But how to serve God, since He is Incorporate and needs no personal service? We can serve Him by serving His creation. There is an Urdu verse which says, 'Man can never be God but in essence he is not different from Divinity.' Let us make our village our universe. We shall then serve God by serving our village. To relieve the distress of the unemployed by providing them with work, to tend the sick, to wean the people from their insanitary habits, to educate them in cleanliness and healthy living, should be the job of a Khudai Khidmatgar. And since whatever he does is in God's service, his service will be performed with far more diligence and care than that of paid workers," he said.

He ended by giving a few practical hints: "A Khudai Khidmatgar will keep a strict account of every minute of his time which he will regard as God's trust. To waste a single moment of one's time in idleness or frivolity is a sin against God. It is on a par with stealing. If there is even a tiny little bit of land available, he will occupy himself with growing something on it—food or vegetables for the destitute and the needy. If he should feel inclined to sit idle and do nothing because his parents have enough money to enable him to purchase food and vegetables from the bazar, he will argue to himself that by drawing upon the bazar supplies, he deprives the poor of the same and steals what belongs to God. Before he purchases or uses anything, a Khudai Khidmatgar will ask himself whether there is not somebody else whose need may be greater than his. Supposing somebody places a sumptuous dish before him and a starving person appears on the scene, he will think of the latter's need first, feed him and then alone partake of the dish."

Twenty-six miles to the west of Kohat is Hangu, the headquarters of the tahsil. Gandhi visited it the following day. In the address, there was a remark that the Frontier Province held the key to India's freedom. While agreeing with that remark, Gandhi added that in the Frontier Province again the Khudai Khidmatgars held the key. "Even as the rose fills with its sweet fragrance all the air around, when one lakh of the Khudai Khidmatgars become truly non-violent, their fragrance will permeate the entire length and breadth of the country and cure the evil of slavery with which we are afflicted."

At Hangu, Gandhi spoke to the Khudai Khidmatgars. He referred to an address of welcome presented to him at Nasarat Khel on the way.

In it, there was a reference to the last struggle. "Let me tell you," he remarked, "that civil disobedience may come and go, but our non-violent struggle for freedom goes on and will continue till independence is attained. Only the form has changed." Referring to the other point in that address, namely, that the Khudai Khidmatgars had not been cowed down by repression and never would be, he said: "I know that to ninety per cent Indians, non-violence means that and nothing else. It is good so far. There is bravery in it. But you and particularly the Khudai Khidmatgar officers must clearly understand that this is not the whole of non-violence. If you have really understood the meaning of non-violence, it should be clear to you that non-violence is not a principle or virtue to be brought into play on a particular occasion or to be practised with reference to a particular party or section. It has to become a part and parcel of our being. Anger should disappear from our hearts altogether, otherwise where is the difference between ourselves and our oppressors! Anger may lead one person to issue an order to open fire, another to use the abusive language, and a third one to use the lathi. At root it is all the same. It is only when you have become incapable of feeling or harbouring anger in your hearts that you can indeed claim to have shed violence or can expect to remain non-violent to the end."

He then explained the difference between the civil disobedience and satyagraha: "Our civil disobedience or non-co-operation, by its very nature, was not meant to be practised for all time. But the fight which we are today putting up through our constructive non-violence has a validity for all time; it is the real thing. Supposing the Government were to cease to arrest civil resisters, our jail-going would then stop, but that would not mean our fight is over. A civil resister does not go to jail to embarrass the jail authorities by indulging in breach of jail rules. Of course, there can be civil disobedience in jail too. But there are definite rules for it. The point is that the civil resister's fight does not end with his imprisonment. Once we are inside the prison, we become civilly dead so far as the outside world is concerned. But inside the prison our fight to convert the hearts of the Government's bondslaves, that is, the jail officials, just begins. It gives us a chance of demonstrating to them that we are not like thieves or dacoits, that we wish them no ill, nor do we want to destroy the opponent, but want only to make him our friend, not by servilely obeying all orders, just or unjust, — that is not the way to win true friendship—but by showing them that there is no evil in us, that we sincerely wish them well and in our hearts pray that God's goodness may be upon them. My fight continued even when I was lodged behind the prison-bars. I have been several times in prison

and every time I have left only friends behind in the jail officials and others with whom I have come into contact.

"It is a speciality of non-violence that its action never stops. That cannot be said of the sword or the bullet. The bullet can destroy the enemy; non-violence converts the enemy into a friend and thus enables the civil resister to assimilate to himself the latter's strength."

By their civil disobedience struggle, he continued, they had demonstrated to the world their determination no longer to be ruled by the British. But they had now to give proof of valour of another and higher type. During the Khilafat days, tall, hefty Pathan soldiers used to come and meet the Ali Brothers and himself secretly. They used to tremble at the thought of their visit being discovered by their superior officers and resulting in their dismissal from service. In spite of their tall stature and the physical strength, they used to cower and become servile when confronted by a person physically stronger than they. "I want strength which will enable me to submit to none but God, my sole Lord and Master. It is only when I can do that that I can claim to have realized non-violence."

"One need not go to a school or a teacher to learn the use of non-violence," he said. Its virtue lay in its simplicity. If they realized that it was the most active principle that worked all the twenty-four hours, without rest or remission, they would look for the opportunities for its application in their homes, in the streets, in relation to their foes, no less than friends. They could begin to practise it in their homes from that very day. He had disciplined himself sufficiently never to feel angry with the enemy, but he confessed that he sometimes lost temper with friends. Such discipline in non-violence as he had, he had at home from his wife. He used to be a tyrant at home. His tyranny was the tyranny of love. "I used to let loose my anger upon Kasturba. But she bore it all meekly and uncomplainingly. I had a notion that it was her duty to obey me, her lord and master, in everything. But her unresisting meekness opened my eyes and slowly it began to dawn upon me that I had no such prescriptive right over her. If I wanted her obedience, I had first to persuade her by patient argument. She thus became my teacher in non-violence. And I dare say, I have not had a more loyal and faithful comrade in life. I literally used to make life a hell for her. Every other day I would change my residence, prescribe what dress she was to wear. She had been brought up in an orthodox family, where untouchability was observed. Muslims and untouchables used to frequent our house. I made her serve them all, regardless of her innate reluctance. But she never said 'no'. She was not educated in the usual sense of the term and was simple and unsophisticated. Her guileless simplicity conquered me."

"You all have wives, mothers and sisters at home," he continued. "You can take the lesson of non-violence from them. You must besides take the vow of truth, and ask yourselves how dear truth is to you and how far you observe it in thought, word and deed. A person who is not truthful, is far away from non-violence. Untruth itself is violence."

The month of Ramzan had just set in. Gandhi told them how it could be used to make a start in non-violence. "We seem to think that the observance of Ramzan begins and ends with abstention from food and drink. We think nothing of losing temper over trifles or indulging in abuse during the sacred month of Ramzan. If there is the slightest delay in serving the repast at the time of the breaking of the fast, the poor wife is hauled over live coals. I do not call it observing Ramzan but its travesty. If you really want to cultivate non-violence, you should take a pledge that come what may, you will not give way to anger or order about members of your household or lord it over them. You can thus utilize trifling little occasions in everyday life to cultivate non-violence in your own person and teach it to your children."

He took another instance. Supposing somebody hits his child with a stone, usually the Pathan tells it not to return home to whine, but to answer back with a bigger stone. But a votary of non-violence, he said, would tell his child not to meet a stone by stone but by embracing a boy who threw the stone and making friends with him. "The same formula, to banish anger completely from the heart and to make everybody into one's friend, is indeed enough to win India her independence. It is the surest and the quickest way, too, and it is my claim that for winning independence for the poor masses of India, it is the only way."

Gandhi reached Bannu on October 24, after eighty miles' drive. In all important villages, on the way, people had raised arches of green plantain stems and leaves and beflagged the approaches to the villages. For eight long miles, on one side of Bannu, the Red Shirts were posted at regular intervals, interspersed with knots of Waziris, Bhitannis and Orakzais. Their flowing robes, loose baggy pyjamas, camels, and matchlocks which they carried on their shoulders, lent a bizarre effect to the reception which was enlivened by the playing of *surnais* and the beating of drums.

Bannu, a walled city, was still under the shadow of a recent raid. A party of raiders, numbering about two hundred, had marched one evening into the city through one of the city gates, which they forced or got opened by the sentries on duty. They looted shops while the town was still awake, fired shots as they progressed, and set some shops on fire. And yet, they met no resistance from the police, and made their exit as openly as they had come in, carrying away with them booty,

worth one to three lakhs of rupees. Several people were killed during the raid. Twenty-two raids by tribes had occurred in Bannu and other places during the three months preceding this raid. Thirteen Hindus and Muslims had been killed. Following upon the raid a dozen Hindus had been kidnapped. The Congress Working Committee had asked one of its members, Mr. Asaf Ali, to inquire into the recent raids. After a brief interview with Gandhi in the Frontier, Mr. Asaf Ali produced a detailed report on the raids in Bannu.

In Bannu deputations on behalf of the Citizens' Defence Committee and the Sufferers' Relief Committee met Gandhi. A group of Waziri tribesmen and some of the bereaved relatives of kidnapped persons also met him. On October 25 Gandhi delivered a memorable speech:

"Perhaps, you know that, for two months, I have been observing complete silence. I have benefited by it, and I believe, it has benefited the country too. The silence was originally taken in answer to an acute mental distress, but subsequently, I decided to prolong it indefinitely on its own merits. It has served me as a wall of protection and enabled me to cope with my work better than before. When I came here, I had relaxed my silence only for the purpose of having talks with the Khudai Khidmatgars, but I had to yield to Khan Saheb's pressure.

"I gave many hours today seeing deputations and studying the papers presented to me. The recent raid of Bannu and the happenings during the raid have touched me deeply. This province is peculiarly placed and is different from other provinces, inasmuch as on one side it is surrounded by a number of border tribes containing men whose profession is raiding. So far as I have been able to know, they are not actuated by communal considerations. The raiders' motive seems to be the satisfaction of primary needs. That the Hindus are more often their victims is probably due to the fact that they generally possess more money. The kidnapping too appears to have the same motive. Continuation of the raids is in my opinion a proof of British failure in this part of India. The Frontier policy has cost the country crores of rupees and thousands of lives have been sacrificed. The brave tribesmen still remain unsubdued. If all the accounts I have heard today are substantially correct, and I believe they are, life and property are not secure in this province.

"A number of people whose relatives or dear ones have either been killed or kidnapped and held to ransom by the raiders, saw me today. As I listened to their harrowing tales of distress, my heart went out to them in sympathy. But I confess to you that with all the will in the world, I possess no magic spell by which I could restore them to their families. Nor should you expect much from the Government or the Congress ministry. No government can afford, and the present British

Government lacks even the will, to mobilize its military resources every time one of its subjects is kidnapped, unless the person kidnapped happens to belong to the ruling race.

"After studying all the facts, I have gained the impression that the situation in respect of border raids has grown worse since the inauguration of the Congress Government. The Congress ministers have no effective control over the police, none over the military. The Congress ministry in this province has less than the others. I, therefore, feel that unless Dr. Khan Sahib can cope with the question of raids, it might be better for him to tender his resignation. There is danger of the Congress losing its prestige in this province if the raids continue to increase. Apart from my opinion, you have to say for yourselves whether in spite of the handicaps I have mentioned, you would rather have the Congress ministry or some other. After all, the Prime Minister is your servant. He holds office under the triple sufferance of his electorate, the Provincial Congress Committee and the Working Committee.

"Some of those who met me today asked me if they could seek safety by migrating from the Frontier Province. I have told them that migration is a perfectly legitimate course to adopt when there is no other way of living with safety and honour. A complaint has further been brought to me that the Muslim population in the affected places no longer gives help against the raiders as they used to formerly, before certain sections of the Frontier Crimes Regulation Act were repealed, and that has encouraged the raiders. While that may be true, let me warn you that if you depend for your protection on the armed assistance of others, you must be prepared, sooner or later, to accept the domination of these defenders. Of course, you are entitled to learn the art of defending yourselves with arms. You must develop a sense of co-operation. In no case should you be guilty of cowardice. Self-defence is everybody's birthright. I do not want to see a single coward in India.

"And the fourth alternative is that of non-violent approach, which I am before you to suggest. It is the surest and infallible method of self-defence. If I had my way, I would go and mix with the tribes and argue it out with them and I am certain that they will not be impervious to the argument of love and reason. But I know, today, that door is shut to me. The Government will not permit me to enter the tribal territory.

"The tribesman cannot be the bogy man that he is represented to be. He is a human being, just like you and me, and capable of responding to the human touch which has been hitherto conspicuous by its absence in dealing with them. A number of Waziris came and saw me today at noon. I did not find that their nature was essentially different from human nature elsewhere.

"Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature. You are a community of traders. Do not leave out of your traffic that noblest and precious merchandise, love. Give to the tribesmen all the love you are capable of, and you will have theirs in return.

"To seek safety by offering blackmail or ransom to the raiders would be a direct invitation to them to repeat their depredations and would be demoralizing alike to the giver and the tribesmen. Instead of offering them money, the rational course would be to raise them above penury by teaching them industry, and thereby removing the principal motive that leads them into the raiding habit.

"I am having talks with the Khudai Khidmatgars in this connection and evolving a plan in collaboration with Badshah Khan. If the plan bears fruit and the Khudai Khidmatgars truly become what their name signifies, the influence of their example, like the sweet fragrance of the rose, will spread to the tribes and might provide a permanent solution of the Frontier question."

To the Khudai Khidmatgar officers at Bannu, Gandhi explained the difference between non-violence of the strong and non-violence of the weak, and the difference between the constructive work taken up as a philanthropic activity or as a political expedient and constructive work linked to non-violence. He recalled how the movement of non-violence was launched in India. Millions at that time felt that they would not be able to fight the British Government with the sword, as the latter were infinitely better armed. He told them that even if they went forth to fight, sword in hand, they had to be ready to face death. If the sword broke in their hand, death would be a certainty. Why should not they then learn the art of dying without killing and pit against the enemy the strength of their spirit? The Government might imprison them, or confiscate their property or even kill them. What did it matter? The argument went home. But in their heart of hearts, many had the feeling that if only they had sufficient armed strength, they would resort to fighting. They accepted non-violence, because there was nothing else. In other words, there was violence in the heart. Only it was given up in action. It was non-violence of the weak, not of the brave. Even so it had made them stronger. He was there to tell them that it was a big mistake to regard non-violence as a weapon of the weak or to adopt it as such. If the Khudai Khidmatgars fell into that mistake, it would indeed be a tragedy. "If you give up the sword at Badshah Khan's word but retain it in your hearts, your non-violence will be a shortlived thing, not even a nine days' wonder. After a few years you will want to revert to it but, may be, you will then find that you have got out of the habit

and are lost to both the ideals. Nothing will, in that event, remain to you but vain regret. What I want of you is a unique thing that you will disdain to use the sword although you have got the capacity and there is no doubt as to victory. Even if the opponent is armed with a broken sword, you will oppose your neck to it. And this, not with anger or with retaliation in your hearts but only love. If you have really understood non-violence in this sense, you will never want to use the sword because you will have got something infinitely superior in its place.

"You will then ask, 'how will all this have any effect on the British Government?' My reply is that by uniting all the people of India in a common bond of love through our selfless service we can transform the atmosphere in the country so that the Britisher will not be able to resist it. You will say that the Britisher is impervious to love. My thirty years' unbroken experience is to the contrary. Today, 17,000 Englishmen can rule over three hundred millions of Indians, because we are under a spell of fear. If we learn to love one another, if the gulf between Hindu and Muslim, caste and outcaste, rich and poor, is obliterated, a handful of Englishmen would not dare to continue their rule over us."

And then Gandhi came to the constructive programme and its place in the scheme of non-violence as a dynamic force. He had placed the programme of non-violence before the country in 1920. It was divided into two parts, non-co-operation and the constructive programme. The latter included establishment of communal unity, abolition of untouchability, prohibition, complete eradication of the drink and drug evil, and the propagation of khadi, hand-spinning and hand-weaving and other cottage industries. But these things had to be taken up not merely as a political expediency but as an integral part of the programme of non-violence. This has made all the difference. For instance, Hindu-Muslim unity regarded as an expedient was one thing, and quite another when adopted as an integral part of non-violence. "The former by its very nature, cannot be lasting. It will be discarded as soon as the political exigency that suggested it is over. It may even be a stratagem or a ruse. When it is a part of the programme of non-violence, it will have nothing but love at its root and will be sealed with one's heart's blood."

In the same way the charkha or the spinning wheel had to be linked to non-violence. "Today, there are millions of unemployed destitutes in India. One way to deal with them is to allow them to die off so that, as in South Africa, there might be more per capita land for the survivors. That would be the way of violence. The other way, the way of non-violence, is based on the principle of 'even unto this last'. It requires us to have equal regard for the least of God's creation. A votary of this path will deny to himself what cannot be shared with the least. That

applies even to those who labour with their hands—the relatively better off among the labouring class must seek to align themselves with the less fortunate." It was this line of thinking which had led to the discovery of the charkha on his part. "I had not even seen a charkha when I discovered its use. In fact I called it handloom in *Hind Swaraj*, not knowing a spinning wheel from a handloom. I had before my mind's eye the poor, landless labourer without employment or means of subsistence, crushed under the weight of poverty. How could I save him—that was my problem. Even now, while I am sitting with you in these comfortable surroundings, my heart is with the poor and the oppressed in their humble cottages. I would feel more at home in their midst. If I allowed myself to succumb to the love of ease and comfort, it would be my undoing as a votary of ahimsa. What is it then that can provide a living link between me and the poor? The answer is the charkha. No matter what one's occupation or rank in life is, the charkha, taken with all that it signifies, will provide the golden bridge to unite him to the poor. For instance, if I am a doctor, while I draw the sacrificial thread—spinning not for myself—it will make me think how I can assuage the suffering of the destitute instead of the royalty in rich palaces with the prospect of fat fees. The charkha is not my invention. It was there before. My discovery consisted in linking it to the programme of non-violence and independence. God whispered into my heart: 'If you want to work through non-violence, you have to proceed with small things, not big.' If we had worked the fourfold programme in its completeness during the last twenty years as I had envisaged it, we should have been our masters today. No foreign power would have dared to cast its evil eye upon us. No enemy from outside would have dared to come and do us harm if there had been none within. Even if one had come, we would have assimilated him to ourselves and he would not have been able to exploit us."

"It is this type of non-violence," he concluded, "that I want you to attain. I expect you to be gold of 24 carats, nothing less. Of course, you can deceive me. If you do that, I shall blame myself only. But if you are sincere, you have to prove by your action that nobody need be afraid of a Red Shirt or know fear while there is a Red Shirt alive."

Before leaving Bannu, Gandhi went to see the site of the recent raid and then left for Lakki. A special feature of the programme there was the Khatak dance that Abdul Ghaffar had specially arranged for Gandhi. It is based on movements involved in sword-play and is popular among the Khatak clan. Their feet stamp and they leap, now with the force of elephants, then with grace of gazelles. Like many other folk arts it was fast falling into desuetude, when the Khudai Khidmatgar movement,

which stands for the revival of all that is best in ancient, indigenous Pakhtu culture, came to the rescue. The elemental vigour and simplicity of its rhythmic movements to the accompaniment of drums and *surnais* held the spectators spellbound.

There was a meeting at night when the forest of matchlocks and the service rifles with which the gathering was bristling, provided a background for his theme, "the power of disarmament":

"An armed soldier relies on his weapons for his strength. Take away from him his weapons—his gun or his sword—and he generally becomes helpless, his resistance collapses and nothing is left to him but surrender. But a person who has truly realized the principle of non-violence has God-given strength for his weapon of which he cannot be deprived and which the world has not known anything to match. Man may, in a moment of unawareness, forget God, but He keeps watch over him and protects him always. If the Khudai Khidmatgars have understood this secret, if they have realized that non-violence is the greatest power on earth, well and good; otherwise, it would be better for Badshah Khan to restore to them their weapons which they have discarded at his instance. They will then be at least brave after the manner of the world that has today made the worship of brute force its cult. But if they discard their old weapons and at the same time remain strangers to the power of non-violence, it is a tragedy for which I for one am not and, as far as I know, Badshah Khan too is not prepared."

His address to the Khudai Khidmatgars was on the organization of non-violence:

"The principles on which a non-violent organization is based are different from and the reverse of what obtains in a violent organization. For instance, in the orthodox army there is clear discrimination as between an officer and a private. The latter is subordinate and inferior to the former. In a non-violent army the general is just the chief servant—first among equals. He claims no privilege over or superiority to the rank and file. You have fondly given the title 'Badshah Khan' to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. But if in his heart of hearts he actually began to believe that he could behave like an ordinary general, it would spell his downfall and bring his power to an end. He is Badshah in the sense only that he is the truest and foremost Khudai Khidmatgar and excels all other Khudai Khidmatgars in the quality and volume of service.

"The second difference between a military organization and a peace organization is that in the former, the rank and file have no part in the choice of their general and the other officers. These are imposed upon them and enjoy unrestricted power over them. In a non-violent army, the general and the officers are elected or act as if they are elected. Their

authority is moral and rests solely on the willing obedience of the rank and file.

"So much for internal relations between the general of a non-violent army and his soldiers. Coming to their relations with the outside world, the same sort of relation is visible. Just now, we have to deal with an enormous crowd that had gathered outside this room. You tried to disperse it with persuasion and loving argument, not by using force, and, when in the end, you failed in your attempt, you withdrew and sought relief by getting behind the closed doors of this room. Military discipline knows no moral pressure.

"Let me proceed a step further. The people who are crowding outside here are all our friends though they are not Khudai Khidmatgars. They are eager to listen to what we may tell them. But there may be others besides them elsewhere who may be not well disposed towards us, who may be even hostile to us. In armed organizations, the only recognized way of dealing with such persons is to drive them out by force. Here, to regard even in thought, the opponent or, for that matter, anybody as your enemy, would, in the parlance of non-violence or love, be called a sin. Far from seeking revenge, a votary of non-violence would pray to God that He might bring about a change of heart in his opponent, and if that does not happen, he would be prepared to bear any injury that his antagonist might inflict upon him, not in a cowardly or helpless spirit but bravely with a smile on his face. I believe implicitly in the ancient saying that non-violence, will surely melt the stoniest hearts."

He illustrated his remarks by describing how Mir Alam Khan, his Pathan assailant in South Africa, had ultimately repented and become friendly. "This could not have happened if I had retaliated," he said. "My action can be fitly described as a process of conversion. Unless you have felt within you this urge to convert your enemy by your love, you had better retrace your steps. Non-violence is not for you."

" 'What about thieves, dacoits and spoilers of defenceless women?' you will ask. 'Must a Khudai Khidmatgar maintain non-violence in regard to them too?' My answer is most decidedly 'yes'. Punishment is God's, who alone is the infallible judge. It does not belong to man 'with judgement weak'. Renunciation of violence must not mean apathy or helplessness in the face of wrong-doing. If our non-violence is genuine and rooted in love, it ought to provide a more effective remedy against wrong-doing than the use of brute force. I certainly expect you to trace out the dacoits and show them the error of their ways, and in so doing, brave even death."

On the evening of October 27, Gandhi arrived at Dera Ismail Khan. It was still passing through the aftermath of the 1930 Hindu-Muslim

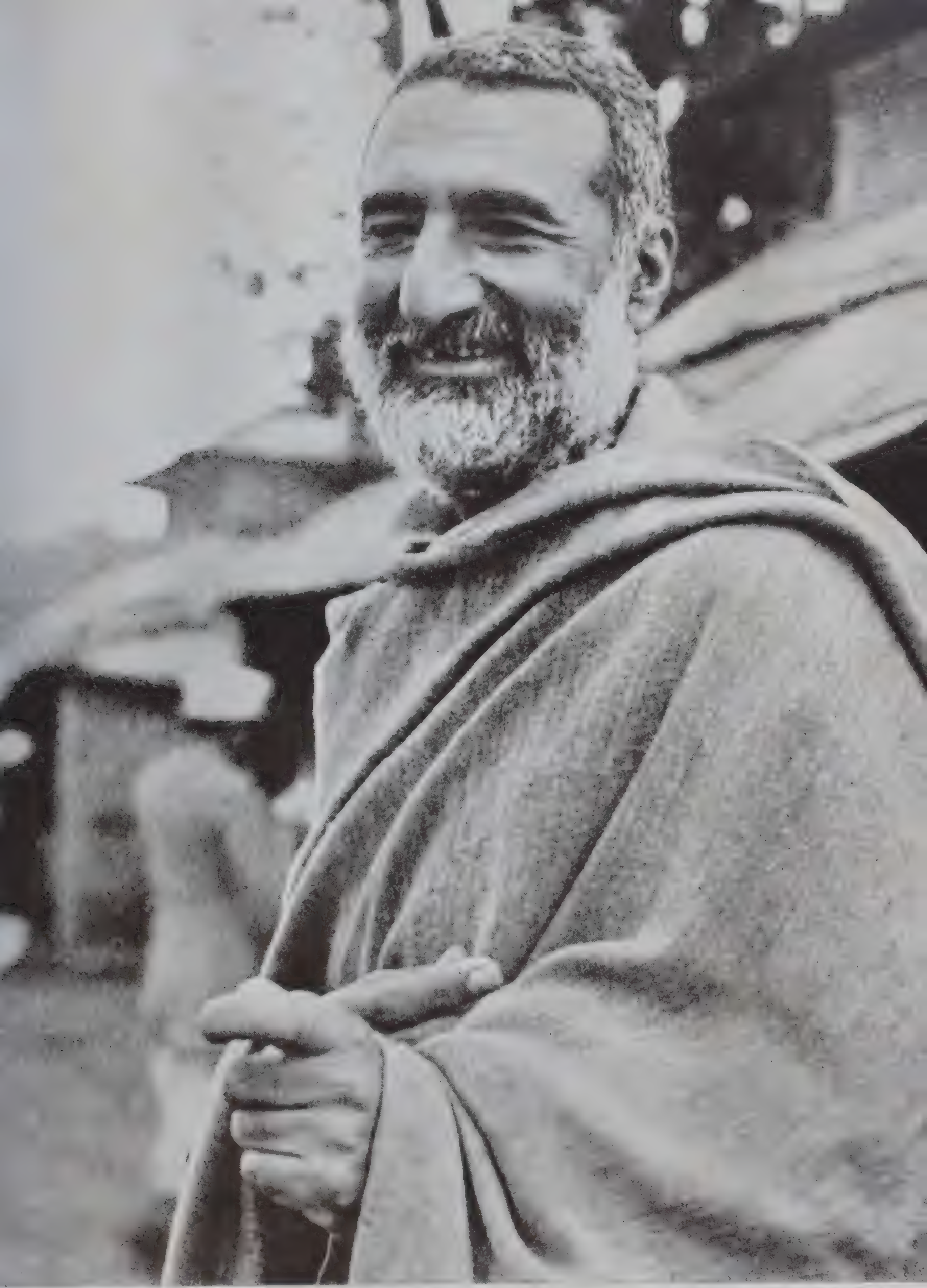


Photo. D. G. Tendulkar

Badshah Khan



Photo: Kanu Gandhi

At Taxila, 1938

riots with its shocking memories of arson and loot. The local Congress organization existed only in name and the co-operation of the Khudai Khidmatgars was unwelcome to the local volunteers. The result was that arrangements for keeping the crowds under control at Gandhi's residence completely broke down and there was pandemonium, making the holding of the prayer meeting impossible. Gandhi tried in vain to take shelter behind bolted doors from the crowd, who would not leave him at peace even there. After two days, the Nawab of Dera Ismail Khan removed Gandhi, with the permission of his Hindu host, to the comparative peace of his residence.

Referring to the Khudai Khidmatgars and to the strained relations between them and the local volunteers which he had noticed, Gandhi observed at the prayer meeting: "These differences are unfortunate. If, however, the Khudai Khidmatgars live up to their creed, as they have now understood it, the differences and quarrels will be the things of the past. They are on their trial. If they come out victorious, they will be instrumental in bringing about communal unity and establishing swaraj. To banish anger altogether from one's breast, I know, is a difficult task. It cannot be achieved through purely personal effort. It can be done only by God's grace. I ask you all to join me in the prayer that God might enable the Khudai Khidmatgars to conquer the last traces of anger and violence that might still be lurking in their breasts."

At the public meeting at Tank, on October 31, Gandhi referred to the lament that the Hindus of Tank had poured out before him. "They feel," he said, "that the existence of a microscopic Hindu minority in the midst of the predominantly Muslim population in this area can be rendered possible only if the latter will be as true *hamsayas*, neighbours, to them, and they asked me to appeal to the Khudai Khidmatgars to fulfil their natural role in respect of them. I entirely endorse their feeling and their appeal, and I am convinced that it is within your power to set them at their ease if you will but fulfil the expectations you have raised in me. As I observed on the previous occasion, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Englishmen are being weighed in the balance. History will record its verdict about the Englishmen's deeds. But the Hindus and the Muslims can write their own history by being correct in their mutual dealings. For the Khudai Khidmatgars their course of action has been determined. They have to become a living wall of protection to their neighbours. A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. It has happened before and it may again happen if the non-violence of the Khudai Khidmatgars is unalloyed gold, not mere glittering tinsel."

In his discourse to the Khudai Khidmatgars, Gandhi chose for his

text what a Muslim notable told him. "If in your heart of hearts there is the slightest inclination to regard non-violence as a mere cloak for or a stepping-stone to greater violence as suggested by this friend," he told them, "nay, unless you are prepared to carry your non-violence to its ultimate logical conclusion and to pray for forgiveness even for a baby-killer and a child-murderer, you cannot sign your Khudai Khidmatgar's pledge of non-violence. To sign that pledge with any mental reservation would only bring disgrace upon you and your organization and hurt him whom you delight to call Fakhr-e-Afghan, the Pride of the Pathans."

" 'But what about the classical instance of the defenceless sister or mother who is threatened with molestation by an evil-minded ruffian?' you will ask. 'Is the ruffian in question to be allowed to work his will? Would not the use of violence be permissible even in such a case?' My reply is 'no'. You will entreat the ruffian. The odds are that in his intoxication he will not listen. You will then interpose yourself between him and his intended victim. Very probably you will be killed, but then you will have done your duty. Ten to one, killing you, unarmed and unresisting, will assuage the assailant's lust and he will leave his victim unmolested. But it has been said to me that the tyrants do not act as we want or expect them to. Finding you unresisting, he may tie you to a post and make you witness the rape of the victim. If you have the will, you will so exert yourself that you will break the bonds or break yourself in the attempt. In either case, you will open the eyes of the wrong-doer. Your armed resistance could also do no more; while if you were worsted, the position would very likely be much worse than if you died unresistingly. There is also the chance of the intended victim copying your calm courage and immolating herself rather than allowing herself to be dishonoured."

Leaving Dera Ismail Khan in afternoon of October 31 he entered into the last phase of the tour. He was anxious not to extend the tour a day further than was absolutely necessary into the month of Ramzan. He made a feeling reference to it in his talk to the Khudai Khidmatgars in a way-side village, where he halted for his midday meal. "It has touched me deeply and also humbled me to find that at a time when, owing to the Ramzan fast, not a kitchen fire was lit in the whole of this village of Muslim homes, food had to be cooked for us. I am past the stage when I could fast with you as I did in South Africa to teach the Muslim boys, who were under my care, to keep the Ramzan fast. I had also to consider the feelings of Badshah Khan who had made my physical well-being his day-and-night concern and who would have felt embarrassed if I fasted."

The rest of the journey was a mad rush. The party covered one hundred miles on the first day, striking out into the interior to take in the Paniala village, some ten miles away from the main road. It was already dusk, when they reached Mira Khel and the roads were barricaded. Travelling on this section of the road was not considered to be safe and the traffic was not permitted after 4 p.m. But Abdul Ghaffar's presence made all the difference. "Tell them that we want to travel at our own risk," he instructed his son, Wali, who was at the wheel, as the party approached the first barricade. "If you hear somebody shout out 'stop', put on the brakes at once. Nobody will touch us if they know who we are. But if you try to rush past, you may hear a shot ring out after you."

The party halted for the night in the village and the rush was resumed the following morning. They halted for a couple of hours in the village of Ahmadi Banda, skirted the town of Bannu and sped past the grey masses of clay hills of the salt range, then on through the town of Kohat, and over the Kohat Pass. Abdul Ghaffar gave a running commentary on the various sites on the route as the car sped. As they passed one of the military posts with which Bannu-Kohat Road was studded, he exclaimed: "What a costly futility! Mahatmaji, look at this vain display of flags, armoured cars and tanks. They have not been able to capture a small band of robbers that has been harrying this part of the country so long. This year the robber chief actually planted his flag on the yonder hill in sight of the military and challenged them to arrest him, but he is still at large. Either it spells hopeless inefficiency on the part of the military or deliberate criminal apathy."

They then motored 125 miles, and at last reached Peshawar. There were meetings on the way both at Paniala and Ahmadi Banda. Gandhi explained to Khudai Khidmatgars that what he had come to tell them now was not any addition to or extension of what they had known and practised but in several ways its reverse. "I have now had the assurance from your own lips of what I had from Badshah Khan already," he remarked at Paniala. "You have adopted non-violence not merely as a temporary expedient, but as a creed for good. Therefore, mere renunciation of the sword, if there is a sword in your heart, will not carry you far. Your renunciation of the sword cannot be said to be genuine unless it generates in your hearts a power, the opposite of that of the sword and superior to it. Hitherto revenge or retaliation has been held among you as a sacred obligation. If you have a feud with anybody, that man becomes your enemy for all time and the feud is handed down from father to son. But in non-violence, even if somebody regards you as his enemy, you may not so regard him in return and, of course, there can be no question of revenge."

"Who could be more cruel or bloodthirsty than the late General Dyer?" he asked them. "Yet, the Jallianwalla Bagh Congress Inquiry Committee, on my advice, refused to ask for his prosecution. I had no trace of ill will against him in my heart. I would have liked to meet him personally and reach his heart, but that remained a mere aspiration."

At the end of his talk a Khudai Khidmatgar put a poser: "You expect us to protect the Hindus against the raiders and yet you tell us that we may not employ our weapons even against thieves and dacoits."

"The contradiction," Gandhi remarked, "is only apparent. If you have really assimilated the non-violent spirit, you will not wait for the raiders to appear on the scene but will seek them out in their own territory and prevent the raids from taking place. If even then the raid does take place, you will face the raiders and tell them that they can take away all your belongings but they shall touch the property of your Hindu neighbours only over your dead body. And if there are hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgars to protect the Hindu *hamsayas* with their lives, the raiders will certainly think better of butchering in cold blood all the innocent and inoffensive Khudai Khidmatgars who are non-violently pitched against them. You know the story of Abdul Qadir Jilani and his forty gold mohurs with which his mother had sent him to Baghdad. On the way the caravan was waylaid by robbers who proceeded to strip Abdul Qadir's companions of all their belongings. Thereupon, Abdul Qadir, who so far happened to be untouched, shouted out to the raiders and offered them the forty gold mohurs which his mother had sewn into the lining of his tunic. The legend goes that the raiders were so struck by the simple naivety of the boy, that the saint then was, that they not only let him go untouched but returned to his companions all their belongings."

The Bar Association of Peshawar presented Gandhi with an address claiming him as one of their fraternity. Gandhi said that he was hardly entitled to that privilege, because he had been disbarred by his own Inn and he had long forgotten his law. Of late, he had more often been engaged in breaking laws than in expounding or interpreting them in the courts of the land.

In view of the central place which Gandhi assigned to khadi and to the organization of cottage industries in the scheme of non-violence, he agreed to perform the opening ceremony of a khadi exhibition at Peshawar, the first of its kind in the Frontier Province. The Khudai Khidmatgars supplied a corps of volunteers. All the ministers and a large section of the gentry, especially women, attended the exhibition. Gandhi in his written message in Hindustani, which was printed and distributed among the visitors, said:

"Do not be misled by names. A piece of the Japanese cloth cannot become swadeshi merely by being labelled 'swadeshi'. Only an article which is wholly manufactured in India by the labour of India's millions living in the villages and out of raw materials grown in India deserves the name of swadeshi.

"Khadi alone, it will be seen, fully satisfies this test; all other cloth is a travesty of swadeshi. Just as there can be no dawn without the sun, so there can be no genuine swadeshi without khadi.

"And judged by this test, Peshawar is left far behind in the race for swadeshi. There is only one Khadi Bhandar here and that too is being run at a loss. I hope that one result of this exhibition will be to put the Khadi Bhandar on a firm footing and to preclude the possibility of its having to close down."

Declaring the exhibition open, Gandhi said:

"Dr. Gopichand has thanked the ministers for the help they are giving to khadi work. But I find that neither all the ministers nor all Congress M.L.A.'s here use khadi as habitual wear. Some wear it only in the assembly. Some do not do even that. This is contrary both to the spirit and the letter of the Congress constitution. Even the Red Shirts have yet to become Khadi Shirts. If they all take to khadi, the one lakh of them in less than no time make the whole province khadi-clad. This province is rich in the resources for the manufacture of khadi, but it comes last in respect of khadi work actually done.

"I would like you all to visit the exhibition in a spirit of inquiry and study. Organization of khadi production, unlike textile mill industry, does not require lakhs of capital and highly specialized technical skill. Even a layman can take it up. I hope that this first khadi exhibition will be followed by many more in the near future."

A high official from South India who sought out Gandhi at Peshawar, put him a poser: "As I move from south northwards, I seem to confront a different humanity altogether. There seems to be no meeting-ground. Will the twain ever meet?" Gandhi's reply was that whilst apparent difference was there, non-violence was the golden bridge that united the ferocious and war-like Pathan and the mild and intellectual South Indian. The Khudai Khidmatgars who accepted non-violence as their creed ceased to be different, except in the degree of their non-violent valour, from people in other parts of India. In this question of fusion of various types, as in other knotty questions, the moment we adopt the non-violent approach, all difficulties melt away.

The cis-Indus District of Hazara, the last to be visited during Gandhi's tour, is the northern-most district of the Frontier Province and the only territory of that province east of the Indus. Before entering it, however,

Gandhi paid a visit to Bibhuti, in Chach. This territory, though politically and geographically a part of the Punjab, is linguistically and in respect of customs, habits and mode of life of its people closely allied to the Frontier Province. They had requested that Pakhtu-speaking people of their territory should be permitted to join the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. Gandhi told them that there could be no difficulty in their so doing: "For, any one who signs their pledge and can speak Pakhtu can enrol himself as a Khudai Khidmatgar. The only condition is that he cannot simultaneously be on the register of any other organization."

While driving to Bibhuti, Gandhi's motor-car had a slight accident as a result of which a calf was knocked down and partly run over. The local Congressmen accompanying Abdul Ghaffar threw the blame for the accident on the opponents of Congress ministry. Gandhi observed: "The Khudai Khidmatgars have proved their undoubted capacity for organization. The presence of a picked body of Khudai Khidmatgars at a public meeting makes all the difference between order and disorder. The principle of non-violence requires that they should make the people do through their power of love, all those things which the police do through the power of the lathi and the bullet. When the seedling of love sprouts forth in our hearts, our petty quarrels and mutual bickerings will become a thing of the past. Take today's incident of the calf that was accidentally run over by our car. Love should have prompted the chauffeur to stop the car immediately so that adequate arrangements might be made for the cure and treatment of the injured animal. One of our party showed what seemed to me unseemly haste in naming the so-called opponents as the deliberate authors of the accident. In non-violence we must not be in a hurry to ascribe motives to the opponent or regard him with suspicion unless we have proof positive of it. When love fills the hearts of the Khudai Khidmatgars, we shall have our independence. But independence will not come to us till our love shines out in our littlest acts."

"We must send someone to the place where the accident occurred," he remarked to Abdul Ghaffar, "to offer compensation to the owner of the animal and to take the calf for treatment to a vet." He promptly did the needful.

Gandhi reached Haripur on the evening of November 6. On the way he visited the Punja Saheb where he and Abdul Ghaffar were presented with *saropa*, dress of honour, by the management of the Sikh shrine. The scenes of disorder were repeated at Haripur. At a public meeting in the evening, Gandhi told the audience that observance of courtesy and a punctiliously correct behaviour were as much part of non-violence as

some of the other and higher things of which he had been telling them: "The scientists tell us that we are descended from the orang-utan. That may be so, but then it is not the man's destiny to live and die a brute. In proportion as we cultivate non-violence and voluntary discipline, we are contradistinguished from brute nature and fulfil our destiny. One of the obligations that non-violence places upon us is to respect the rights even of the weakest, for instance, even a little child's."

A small group of socialists handed to Abdul Ghaffar an address which they wanted to present to Gandhi, but as the meeting had already begun the permission could not be granted. At this, the socialists left the meeting, shouting unseemly slogans. Gandhi utilized the ugly incident to emphasize the necessity of forbearance: "We must meet abuse by forbearance. Human nature is so constituted that if we take absolutely no notice of anger or abuse, the person indulging in it will soon be weary of it and stop. We should harbour no resentment against those who tried to create disturbance which, without their meaning it, taught us a valuable little lesson in forbearance. A satyagrahi always regards the 'enemy' as a potential friend. During half a century of experience I have not come across a case of enmity persisting to the end in the face of absolute non-violence."

Arriving at Abbottabad, on the morning of November 7th, several hours before the scheduled time, Gandhi took his host by surprise. All the important events at Abbottabad were crowded into the second day of his stay. At Manshera there was a public meeting on the 8th at which an address on behalf of the inhabitants was presented to Gandhi. It said: "You will understand and allow for a little pardonable pride on our part for the way in which we of the Frontier Province have taken up and translated into practice your gospel of non-violence. Violence used to be our main preoccupation in life till Badshah Khan, the Pride of the Afghans, weaned us from it. Non-violence may have no special significance for those who are born into that creed. But for us Pathans, it has provided the specific which we so badly need for our ills. The Pathan is, therefore, particularly fitted to understand and appreciate its worth. Islam promulgated peace, that is, non-violence, as the rule of life, and permitted the use of force only as an exception. But, the Pathan, like the rest of the Musalmans, had allowed the exception to usurp the place of the central principle and almost forgotten the central teaching. It was for you to take us back to this central doctrine which we had nearly lost sight of. We assure you that in a very short time the Pathans of the North-West Frontier Province will, without distinction of caste, creed or religion, come to constitute the spearhead of India's non-violent fight for freedom."

Gandhi assured them that he set great store by what they had already achieved in the field of non-violence. But believing as he did in the old adage that from him who has, much more is expected, he warned them that he would not rest satisfied till they had fulfilled their mission of achieving through their non-violence not only their own freedom but the freedom of India. He had visited their province a second time to know them more intimately and to understand how non-violence worked in their midst, and it was his intention to return to them a third time when he hoped once more to pick up the threads of various problems where he had left them.

Speaking to the Khudai Khidmatgars earlier, he had said:

"It is not enough not to hate the enemy. One should feel in one's heart warmth of fellow-feeling towards him. It has become a fashion these days to say that society cannot be organized or run on non-violent lines. I join issue on that point. In a family, when a father slaps his delinquent child, the latter does not think of retaliating. He obeys his father, not because of the deterrent effect of the slap, but because of the offended love which he senses behind it. That, in my opinion, is an epitome of the way in which society is or should be governed. What is true of family, must be true of society, which is but a larger family. It is man's imagination that divides the world into warring groups of enemies and friends. In the ultimate resort it is the power of love that acts even in the midst of the clash and sustains the world.

"I am told that the Red Shirts here are Red Shirts only in name. I hope the allegation is baseless. I know that Badshah Khan is seriously disturbed at the infiltration of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement with undesirable and self-seeking elements. I share with him his feeling that mere accession of numbers, unless they are true exponents of the creed which they profess, will only weaken the movement.

"The Red Shirt movement, today, has drawn the attention of the whole of India and even outside. And yet what it has achieved is only a small fraction of what still remains to be achieved. I implicitly accept the assurance given by the Khudai Khidmatgars that they are anxious to understand and practise the doctrine of non-violence in full. There are tremendous heights before them to be scaled. The programme of constructive non-violence that I have placed before them is self-acting when once it is well started. Its enforcement will be a sure test too of the earnestness and sincerity of the Khudai Khidmatgars."

Returning to Abbottabad in the afternoon, Gandhi paid a visit to the local Harijan temple and was pleased to learn that in Abbottabad the Harijans suffered no disabilities in respect of the admission of their children to schools and the use of wells and other public amenities.

The minorities' deputation met Gandhi in the afternoon. What disturbed them particularly was that the incidence of violent crime had steadily increased since the constitution of the Frontier Province into a separate province. They suggested that fire-arms and training in their use ought to be provided free to the minority population settled on the border, to facilitate self-protection. They agreed, however, that the problem of trans-border raids could be finally and adequately solved only by the majority community being awakened to its sense of duty towards the minority community.

Gandhi said that whilst he could support their demand that licences for keeping fire-arms should be freely issued on application, it would be too much to expect the Government to distribute the fire-arms free among the entire border population. They could raise a fund for free distribution of fire-arms, if they wanted, but he had his doubts whether free distribution of and training in the use of fire-arms would solve the question of trans-border insecurity. If the experience during the recent raid at Bannu was any guide, such a step would prove to be an expensive pedantry. During the Bannu raid, he was told, only one gun on the part of the citizens was in play although there was no lack of fire-arms in the city at the time of the raid, and even that gun caused more casualties among the public than among the raiders. He, however, agreed with them in regard to what they had observed about the duty of the majority community. Badshah Khan was trying to prepare the Khudai Khidmtagars for discharging their duty of protecting citizens against raids.

At one place it was complained that the Hindus and Sikhs regarded contact with the Musalmans as polluting. This, Gandhi pointed out, if true, was a travesty of true religion. An equal regard and reverence for faiths other than one's own, is a duty everywhere and always. But, in the case of a microscopic minority that is placed in the midst of an overwhelming majority holding a different faith from its own, it becomes a primary condition of its existence. If, however, it is a virtue of necessity for the minority community to hold in due respect the faith and feelings of the majority community, it should be the privilege and duty of the majority community to show scrupulous regard for the faiths and feelings of the minorities.

The programme at Abbottabad concluded with a public meeting at which several addresses and a consolidated purse of Rs. 1,125 were presented to Gandhi. Some of the addresses indulged in language of wild hyperbole. In reply he said: "You have in your address expressed your gratification at having in your midst 'the greatest man on earth'. I wondered as I listened to your address as to who that 'greatest man,

could be. Certainly, it could not be I. I know my shortcomings but too well. There is a celebrated story about Solon, the great lawgiver of Athens. He was asked by Croesus, who was reputed to be the wealthiest man of his age, to name the happiest man on earth. Croesus had fondly hoped that Solon would name him. But Solon replied that he could say nothing, as no one could be adjudged happy before his end. If Solon found it difficult to pronounce on a man's happiness during his lifetime, how much more difficult it must be to adjudge a man's greatness? True greatness is not found set on a hill for the vulgar crow to gaze it. On the contrary, my seventy years' experience has taught me that the truly great are often those of whom and of whose greatness the world knows nothing during their lifetime. God alone is judge of true greatness, because He alone knows men's hearts."

Quoting again from the address, he said: "Not only the inhabitants of Abbottabad, but even the sun and the moon and the stars here were eager to have a glimpse of me! Am I to understand, my good friends, that your city has all to itself a separate set of sun, moon and stars which do not shine upon Wardha or Sevagram? In Kathiawad we have a class of people known as *bhats* or professional bards who make it their job to sing the praises of their chieftains for money. Well, I will not call you *bhats*—mercenaries. I want you to realize that it is wrong to indulge in hyperbolic praises of your leaders. It neither helps them nor their work. I would like you once for all to forget this practice of presenting laudatory addresses. At three score and ten, I for one have no desire to let what little time God has still left me to be frittered away in listening to hyperbolic balderdash. If an address must be presented, I would like it to be descriptive of the defects and the shortcomings of the recipient of the address, so that he might be helped to turn the searchlight inward and weed them out.

"Ever since my arrival in this province I have been trying to expound to the Khudai Khidmatgars the doctrine of non-violence in all its uncompromising completeness, abating nothing, holding back nothing. I do not claim to have understood the meaning of non-violence in its entirety. What I have realized is only an insignificant fraction of the great whole. It is not given to imperfect man to grasp the whole meaning of non-violence or to practise it in full. That is an attribute of God alone, the Supreme Ruler who suffers no second. But I have constantly and ceaselessly striven for over half a century to understand non-violence and to translate it into my own life. The Khudai Khidmatgars have, no doubt, set a brilliant example in the practice of non-violence to the extent to which they have understood it. It has earned for them the universal admiration. But they have now to move a step further. Their

conception of non-violence has to be broadened and their practice of it, especially in its positive aspects, to be made fuller and deeper, if they are to come out successful in the final heat. Non-violence is not mere disarmament. Nor is it the weapon of the weak and the impotent. A child who has not the strength to wield the lathi does not practice non-violence. More powerful than the armaments, non-violence is a unique force that has come into the world. He who has not learnt to recognize in it a weapon infinitely more potent than brute force has not understood its true nature. This non-violence cannot be 'taught' by word of mouth. But it can be kindled in our heart through the grace of God in answer to earnest prayer. It is stated that today there are one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars who have adopted non-violence as their creed. But before them, as early as 1920, Badshah Khan had come to recognize in non-violence a weapon, the mightiest in the world, and his choice was made. Eighteen years of practice of non-violence have strengthened his faith in it. For, he has seen how it has made his people fearless and strong. The prospect of losing a paltry job used to unnerve them. They feel different beings today. At three score and ten, my faith in non-violence today burns brighter than ever. People say to me, 'Your programme of non-violence has been before the country now for nearly two decades, but where is the promised independence?' My reply is that although the creed of non-violence was professed by millions, it was practised by but a few and that too as a policy only. But with all that the result that has been achieved is sufficiently striking to encourage me to carry on with the experiment with the Khudai Khidmatgars, and God willing, it will succeed."

Gandhi was to leave for Sevagram on the morning of November 9. Abdul Ghaffar was busy settling the final details about his future programme of work and regretted that there was little chance of realizing his long cherished dream of a ramble among the enchanting hills of Shawal and Swat. "Mahatmaji, this is what I have been telling the Khudai Khidmatgars since your arrival: 'You have made the cause of the poor your own. But what have you done to remove their poverty? You have pledged yourself never to retaliate, but have you gone among your opponents to win them by your love?' " He narrated to Gandhi some of his experiences. "A Muslim friend from the Punjab, during a train journey, was full of denunciation of me saying that I had undermined the spirit of Islam by preaching non-violence to the Pathans. I told him that he knew not what he was saying and that he would never have talked like that if he had seen with his own eyes, the wonderful transformation that the message of non-violence has worked in the minds of the Pathans, to whom it had given a new vision of national solidarity.

I cited chapter and verse from the Koran to show the great emphasis that Islam has laid on peace, which is its coping-stone. I also showed to him how the greatest figures in Islamic history were known more for their forbearance and self-restraint than for their fierceness. The reply rendered him speechless."

He then narrated how on another occasion he was accused of having a *lashkar* of one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars to help the Hindus to subdue the Muslim population. "I was advised by several friends to issue a contradiction of the gross libel. But I refused. 'I have not yet sufficiently penetrated the Frontier masses,' I told them. 'To them what I might say will probably be on a par with what anybody else might tell them till, as a result of our selfless service, they learn to know gold from tinsel. I shall wait.'"

"Mahatmaji, I hate politics," he often remarked during the tour. "It is an empty and barren maze. I wish to run away from it and to occupy myself with humanitarian service of the poorest in their homes."

Gandhi's tour ended with a visit to the historic ruins of Taxila before he entrained at the Taxila railway station for Wardha. For more than one thousand years, Buddhism flourished in these parts. The region is strewn with the remains of *stupas* and monasteries and pillars. Arrian has referred to Takshashila as a great and flourishing university town, "the greatest indeed of all the cities which lay between the Indus and the Jhelum and famous at that time and during the centuries immediately following, for its arts and sciences of the day." When the present-day Khudai Khidmatgar signs the pledge of non-violence in thought, word and deed, he is only following in the footsteps of his forbears who chanted, "Let a man conquer anger with non-anger."

Gandhi saw the relics with keen interest. "Just like what my mother used to wear," he exclaimed as a pair of heavy silver anklets was shown to him by the curator. Reluctantly, he took leave of the pageant of India's glorious past that lay spread out before him. Four weeks of the closest partnership in the common quest of non-violence had brought him ever so much closer to Abdul Ghaffar. With a wrench they parted, Gandhi shedding tears.

On the train, Gandhi wrote an article, dated November 11, 1938, for the *Harijan* on "Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan":

"Whatever the Khudai Khidmatgars may be or may ultimately turn out to be, there can be no doubt about what their leader, whom they delight to call Badshah Khan, is. He is unquestionably a man of God. He believes in His living presence and knows that his movement will prosper only if God wills it. Having put his whole soul into his cause, he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to

realize that there is no deliverence for the Pathan except through out-and-out acceptance of non-violence. He does not take pride in the fact that a Pathan is a fine fighter. He appreciates his bravery but he thinks that he has been spoilt by overpraise. He does not want to see his Pathan as a *goonda* of society. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. This, he thinks, can only be achieved through non-violence.

"And as Khan Saheb believes in my non-violence, he wanted me to be as long as I could among the Khudai Khidmatgars. For me I needed no temptation to go to them. I was myself anxious to make their acquaintance. I wanted to reach their hearts. I do not know that I have done so now. Anyway I made the attempt.

"But before I proceed to describe how I approached my task and what I did, I must say a word about Khan Saheb as my host. His one care throughout the tour was to make me as comfortable as the circumstances permitted. He spared no pains to make me proof against privation or discomfort. All my wants were anticipated by him. And there was no fuss about what he did. It was all perfectly natural for him. It was all from the heart. There is no humbug about him. He is an utter stranger to affectation. His attention is, therefore, never embarrassing, never obtrusive. And so when we parted at Taxila, our eyes were wet. The parting was difficult. And we parted in the hope that we would meet again probably in March next. The Frontier Province must remain a place of frequent pilgrimage for me. For, though the rest of India may fail to show the true non-violence, there seems to be good ground for hoping that the Frontier Province will pass through the fiery ordeal. The reason is simple. Badshah Khan commands willing obedience from his adherents said to number more than one hundred thousand. They hang on his lips. He has but to say the word, and it is carried out. Whether in spite of all the veneration he commands the Khudai Khidmatgars will pass the test in constructive non-violence remains to be seen. . .

"At the outset both Khan Saheb and I had come to the conclusion that instead of addressing the whole of the Khudai Khidmatgars at the various centres I should confine myself to the leaders. This would save my energy and be its widest use. And so it proved to be. During the five weeks we visited all the centres, and the talks lasted for one hour or more at each centre. I found Khan Saheb to be a very competent and faithful interpreter. And as he believed in what I said, he put into the translation all the force he could command. He is a born orator and speaks with dignity and effect.

"At every meeting I repeated the warning that unless they felt that in non-violence they had come into possession of a force infinitely superior to the one they had and in the use of which they were adepts, they should have nothing to do with non-violence and resume the arms they possessed before. It must never be said of Khudai Khidmatgars that once so brave, they had become or been made cowards under Khan Saheb's influence. Their bravery consisted not in being good marksmen but in defying death and being ever ready to bare their breasts to the bullets. This bravery they had to keep intact and be ready to show whenever occasion demanded. And for the truly brave such occasions occurred often enough without seeking.

"This non-violence was not a mere passive quality. It was the mightiest force God had endowed man with. Indeed, the possession of non-violence distinguished man from the brute creation. It was inherent in every human being, but in most it lay dormant. Perhaps, the word non-violence was an inadequate rendering of *ahimsa,* which itself was an incomplete connotation of all it was used for conveying. A better rendering would be love or goodwill. Violence was to be met by goodwill. And goodwill came into play only when there was ill will matched against it. To be good to the good is an exchange at par...

"This non-violence or goodwill was to be exercised not only against the Englishmen but it must have full play even among ourselves. Non-violence against the Englishmen may be a virtue of necessity and may easily be a cover for cowardice or simple weakness. It may be, as it often is, a mere expedience. But it could not be an expedience when we have an equal choice between violence and non-violence. Such instances occur in domestic relations, social and political relations among ourselves, not only between the rival sects of the same faith but persons belonging to different faiths. We cannot be truly tolerant towards the Englishmen if we are intolerant towards our neighbours and equals. Hence our goodwill, if we had it in any degree, would be tested almost every day. And if we actively exercised it, we would become habituated to its use in wider fields till at last it became second nature with us.

"Hence, the non-violence of the Khudai Khidmatgars had to show itself in their daily actions. It could be exhibited only if they were non-violent in thought, word and deed.

"And even as a person who relied upon the use of force in his daily dealings would have to undergo a military training, so will a servant of God have to go through a definite training. This was provided for in the very foundation resolution of the special Congress of 1920. It was broadened from time to time, and it was never toned down to my knowledge. The exercise of active goodwill was to be tested through

communal unity, shedding of untouchability by Hindus, the home and hand-manufacture and use of khadi—a sure symbol of oneness with the millions—and prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs. This fourfold programme was called a process of purification and a sure method of gaining the organic freedom for the country. This programme was followed but half-heartedly by the Congressmen and the country, thus betraying a lack of living faith in non-violence or faith in the method devised for its daily practice or both. But, Khudai Khidmatgars were expected and believed to have a living faith in non-violence. Therefore, they would be expected to follow out the whole of constructive self-purification programme of the Congress. I have added to it village sanitation, hygiene and simple medical relief in the villages. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be known by his works. He cannot be in a village without his making it cleaner and affording help to the villagers in their simple ailments. The hospitals and the like are toys of the rich and are available for the most part only to the city-dwellers. Efforts are, no doubt, being made to cover the land with dispensaries. But the cost is prohibitive. Whereas the Khudai Khidmatgars could, with a little but substantial training, easily give relief in the majority of cases of illness that occurred in the villages.

"I told the leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgars that civil disobedience was the end of non-violence, by no means its beginning. Yet, I started in this country at the wrong end in 1918. I was overwhelmed by necessity. The country had not come to harm, only because I, claiming to be an expert in non-violent technique, knew when and how to retrace our steps. Suspension of civil disobedience at Patna was part of the technique. I have just as much faith in the constructive programme of 1920 as I had then. I could not lead a campaign of civil disobedience in terms of Purna Swaraj without due fulfilment of the programme. The right to civil disobedience accrues only to those who know and practise the duty of voluntary obedience to laws whether made by them or others. Obedience should come not from fear of the consequences of the breach but because it is the duty to obey with all our heart and not merely mechanically. Without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition, the civil disobedience is civil only in name and never of the strong but of the weak. It is not charged with goodwill, that is, non-violence. Khudai Khidmatgars had shown in unmistakable terms their bravery in suffering during the civil disobedience days, as did many thousands in the other provinces. But it was not proof positive of goodwill at heart. And it would be a deterioration in the Pathan if he was non-violent only in appearance. For, he must not be guilty of weakness.

"The Khudai Khidmatgars listened to all I said with rapt attention.

Their faith in non-violence is not yet independent of Khan Saheb. It is derived from him. But it is none the less living so long as they have unquestioning faith in their leader, who enjoys undisputed kingdom over their hearts. And Khan Saheb's faith is no lip-profession. His whole heart is in it. Let the doubters live with him as I have all these precious five weeks and their doubt will be dissolved like mist before the morning sun.

"This is how the whole tour struck a very well-known Pathan who met me during the last days of the tour: 'I like what you are doing. You are very clever—I do not know that cunning is not the right word. You are making my people braver than they are. You are teaching them to husband their strength. Of course, it is good to be non-violent up to a point. That they will be under your teaching. Hitler has perfected the technique of attaining violent ends with the actual use of violence. But you have bettered even Hitler. You are giving our men training in non-violence, in dying without killing, so if ever the occasion comes for the use of force, they will use it as never before and certainly more effectively than any other body of persons. I congratulate you.'

"I was silent and I had no heart to write a reply to disillusion him. I smiled and became pensive. I like the compliment that the Pathans would be braver than before (as a result of and) under my teaching. I do not know an instance of a person becoming a coward under my influence. But the friend's deduction was deadly. If in the last heat the Khudai Khidmatgars prove untrue to the creed they profess to believe, non-violence was certainly not in their hearts. The proof will soon come. If they zealously and faithfully follow the constructive programme,there is no danger of their fulfilling the prognostication of the critic. But they will be found among the bravest of men when the test comes."

War And Non-violence

1939

In pursuance of the plan which he had evolved in consultation with Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar launched a vigorous propaganda for the constructive activities. As soon as Gandhi left the Frontier, he toured the districts of Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan to restore confidence among the Hindus and Sikhs of the rural area there. The Hindus and Sikhs residing in this area were panic-stricken and an overwhelming majority of them had left their ancestral homes to settle in the various towns of the Frontier Province. They had large sums outstanding against the Muslims of the villages and there was no likelihood of their realization in case they did not return to their respective places. As a result of the assurance given by Abdul Ghaffar and his Khudai Khidmatgars, a large number of families who had migrated to the towns, returned to their places. The Muslims of the locality waited in a deputation on those who refused to return to their ancestral homes on the plea of constant danger of dacoities and kidnappings. They persuaded them to settle peacefully, assuring them of their personal responsibility in the matter. Several Khudai Khidmatgars carried the message of peace to the remote villages. For the guidance of the Khudai Khidmatgars, Abdul Ghaffar wrote a pamphlet in Pakhtu. He urged them to be patient with the adversaries. From the Koran he quoted: "O believers, when you are faced with force, oppression and excesses, you should not abandon the righteous path and bear with patience all difficulties and miseries."

At Abdul Ghaffar's request Gandhi first sent Mirabehn and then Bibi Amtus Salam to assist him in the work of education and social reform among the Muslim women. Abdul Ghaffar threw open the columns of the *Pakhtun* to the women to write on their problems. "I am keen on having an article or two written by women for every issue of the journal," he pleaded, "and I am trying in that direction through some friends also. When *Pakhtun* was restarted, I had hoped that the Pakhtun women would contribute articles relating to their own problems. For that I have waited long and my patience is now getting exhausted. Formerly, they used to write on interesting subjects, but since the journal is restarted, during these six months, only one article is contributed by them. And that too has come from Bombay. It seems to me that none is interested in raising the status of their sisters and daughters. Here, I want to draw the attention of my Pakhtun brethren to the fact

that unless the women are enlightened, no community in the world can be truly enlightened. The community in which the women are not well trained, can never enjoy freedom. Men and women are like two wheels of a cart. A cart with one wheel cannot move. The mother's lap is the first training-school for a child. And the child, indeed, constitutes the community. A worthy mother rears a worthy child, and an educated mother an educated child. A father does not influence a child to the extent the mother does. I laugh at the ways of most of the educated families today. Their women folk are illiterate. Civilization and culture of a community depend to a large extent on the help rendered to it by its women folk."

Mirabehn sent reports of the progress of work to Gandhi. "If you will be patient, you will find that the Pathan grows on you. He is an admirable fellow—open if he once trusts you," Gandhi wrote to Mirabehn. He intended to visit the Frontier Province again in March but he had to postpone it owing to his tussle with the Indian princes, particularly Rajkot. On July 7, 1939, he entered the Frontier Province, but during the interval his health had suffered a serious set-back and he was unable to tour the districts or even to visit the Khudai Khidmatgar centre. To give him some rest, Abdul Ghaffar made arrangements for a restful stay at Abbottabad, a hill-station. Gandhi had enough time to think and write, as he was kept free of engagements.

On the eve of his departure, Gandhi addressed a public meeting at Abbottabad on July 24: "I hardly thought when I came here, that you would present me with an address even this time too, on my third visit to your province. I had thought that I had sufficiently identified myself with your province to be entitled to be regarded as one of you and, therefore, above the need of such formalities as the presentation of an address."

"Should I suppose that I have still to win my purse?" he asked with a merry twinkle. "Last time you gave me an address and a purse. But this time you have given me only an address and no purse. May I know how I have merited this 'fall from grace'?"

Then, growing serious, Gandhi passed on to the burning question of communal unity:

"I have more than once heard the complaint that the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity is being delayed owing to lack of sufficient effort in its behalf on my part, that if only I would concentrate myself on it exclusively it could be realized today. May I assure you that if I do not seem to be doing that today, it is not because my passion for Hindu-Muslim unity has grown less. But I have realized, as I had never done before, my own imperfection as an instrument for this high mission and

the inadequacy of mere external means for the attainment of big objects. I have learnt more and more to resign myself utterly to His grace.

"If you could dissect my heart, you will find that the prayer and spiritual striving for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity goes on there unceasingly all the twenty-four hours without even a moment's interruption, whether I am awake or asleep. I want Hindu-Muslim unity if only because I know that without it there can be no swaraj. Let no one imagine that because the Hindus constitute the majority community they can win swaraj for India, or even for themselves, by organizing civil disobedience without the backing or support of the other communities. Civil disobedience of the purest type, as I have often repeated, can be effective even if it is confined to a few. But then these few must represent in their persons the united will and strength of the whole nation. Is it not the same in armed warfare? The fighting forces need the backing and co-operation of the entire civil population. Without it they would be crippled. I must be impatient for Hindu-Muslim unity, because I am impatient for swaraj. I have full faith that true and lasting heart unity between the Hindus and Musalmans, not a merely patched-up political compromise, will come sooner or later, sooner perhaps than later. That dream has filled my being since my earliest childhood. I have the vividest recollection of my father's days, how the Hindus and Musalmans of Rajkot used to mix together and participate in one another's domestic functions and ceremonies like blood brothers. I believe that those days will dawn once again over this country. The present bickerings and petty recriminations between the communities are an unnatural aberration. They cannot last for ever.

"The greatest of things in this world are accomplished not through unaided human effort. They come in their own good time. God has His own way of choosing His instruments. Who knows, in spite of my incessant heart prayers I may not be found worthy for this great work! We must all keep our loins girt and our lamps well trimmed. We don't know when or on whom His choice may fall. You may not shirk your responsibility by shoving it all on me. Pray for me that my dream may be fulfilled in my life. We must never give way to despair or pessimism. God's ways are more than man's arithmetic.

"It has grieved me to find that internal squabbles have begun to fill the Congress ranks in this province too. Yesterday, I was closeted for over an hour with the members of your Provincial Congress Committee. They asked me to show them a way out. I suggest to you that the solution lies in your own hands. You have adopted Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan as your uncrowned chieftain. You have given him the proud titles of 'Badshah Khan' and 'Fakhr-e-Afghan'. Let his word be

law to you. He does not believe in argument. He speaks from his heart. You must learn to sink your individual differences and work together like a team under him if the titles you have bestowed upon him are to be vindicated and not remain as mere lip-compliments.

"Then there is the question of poverty among the Frontier masses. I am told that many of them hardly get enough to eat. It is a humiliating reflection that a sturdy race like the Pathans should be in that plight. But, here again, the remedy lies largely with you. You must teach the people to labour with their hands and realize the dignity of work. The ministry can and will, of course, provide facilities. But the spade-work will have to be done by the volunteers.

"May God show the right way! I know that even when we quarrel among ourselves, it is only to hasten the advent of independence in the fond hope that independence will prove a solvent of all our ills. May our passion for independence prove a uniting bond stronger than all the differences that divide us!"

Soon after Gandhi's return to Wardha, the Congress Working Committee commenced its three-day session on August 9 to take important decisions. The committee discussed the critical international situation. It declared its opposition to an imperialist war and reiterated its determination to oppose all attempts to impose a war on India.

The international situation rapidly worsened. Hitler's ultimatum to Poland and the signing of a non-aggression pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union created a grave situation. On September 3, 1939 Britain declared war on Germany, the latter having invaded Poland. On that very day, the Viceroy, without previously consulting Indian leaders or the legislatures, proclaimed that India was at war. A number of ordinances followed. Among those invited by the Viceroy for consultation was Gandhi, who reached Simla on the 5th. In the course of a statement, Gandhi said:

"Having made my position *vis-a-vis* the Congress quite clear, I told His Excellency that my own sympathies were with England and France. I told him that I could not contemplate without being stirred to the very depth the destruction of London which had hitherto been regarded as impregnable . . . I have become disconsolate. In the secret of my heart, I am in perpetual quarrel with God that He should allow such things to go on. My non-violence seems almost impotent. But the answer comes at the end of the daily quarrel that neither God nor non-violence is impotent. Impotence is in men. I must try on without losing hope, even though I may break in the attempt.

"And so, as though in anticipation of agony that was awaiting me, I sent on 23rd July from Abbottabad, the following letter to Hitler:

'. . . It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage stage. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success?. . .'

"And yet it almost seems as if Herr Hitler knows no God but brute force . . . It is in the midst of this catastrophe without parallel that Congressmen and all other responsible Indians, individually or collectively, have to decide what part India is to play in this terrible drama."

The Hindu Mahasabha, the Christian Conference, Liberal Federation and the Indian princes stood for full support to the Government. The Muslim League warned the British Government that it could count on the Muslim support provided the Muslims were given "justice and fair play" in the Congress provinces, and no assurances must be given as to the constitutional advance, nor any new constitution framed without the consent and approval of the Muslim League, "the only organization that can speak on behalf of Muslim India". Among other expressions of opinion, a statement was issued on September 8, signed by Tagore and many others, calling upon India to stand by Great Britain and resist the disastrous policy of domination by force.

The Working Committee of the Congress met at Wardha and discussed for one week the situation created by the outbreak of war. Jinnah was invited to participate in the discussions but he would not come owing to his "previous commitment". Subhas Bose was present by special invitation. Gandhi fully participated in the session. The views of the Congress were clearly expressed in the long resolution passed at Wardha. "Co-operation must be between equals by mutual consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy," said the historic resolution. "The people of India have, in the recent past, faced great risks and willingly made great sacrifices to secure their own freedom and establish a free democratic state in India and their sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom. But, India cannot associate herself in a war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her . . .The Working Committee, therefore, invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present . . ."

Commenting on the resolution, Gandhi said: "The Working Committee's statement on the world crisis took four days before it received the final shape. Every member expressed his opinion freely on the draft that was, at the committee's invitation, prepared by Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru. I was sorry to find myself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British, should be given unconditionally. This could only be done on a purely non-violent basis. But the committee had a tremendous responsibility to discharge. It could not take the purely non-violent attitude. It felt that the nation had not imbibed the non-violent spirit requisite for the possession of the strength which disdains to take advantage of the difficulty of the opponent. But, in stating the reasons for its conclusions, the committee, desired to show the greatest consideration for the English . . ."

Under "Conundrums", Gandhi wrote on September 25:

"There are degrees of violence as of non-violence. The Working Committee has not wilfully departed from the policy of non-violence. It could not honestly accept the real implications of non-violence. It felt that the vast mass of Congressmen had never clearly understood that in the event of danger from without, they were to defend the country by non-violent means. All that they had learnt was that they could put up a successful fight, on the whole non-violent, against the British Government. Congressmen have had no training in the use of non-violence in the other fields. Thus, for example, they had not yet discovered any sure method of dealing successfully in a non-violent manner with the communal riots or *goondaism.* The argument is final, inasmuch as it is based on actual experience. I would not serve the cause of non-violence if I deserted my best co-workers because they could not follow me in an extended application of non-violence. And I, therefore, remain with them in the faith that their departure from the non-violent method will be confined to the narrowest field and will be temporary.

"I have no ready-made concrete plan. For me too, this is a new field. Only I have no choice as to the means. It must be purely non-violent, whether I am closeted with members of the Working Committee or with the Viceroy. Therefore, what I am doing is part of the concrete plan. More will be revealed to me from day to day, as all my plans always have been . . . I would at once ask the Englishmen to lay down arms, free all their vassals, take pride in being called 'little Englanders' and defy all the totalitarians of the world to do their worst. Englishmen will then die unresistingly and go down in history as heroes of non-violence. I would further invite Indians to co-operate with Englishmen in this godly martyrdom. It will be an indissoluble partnership drawn up in letters of the blood of their own bodies, not of their so-called enemies. But, I have no such general power. Non-violence is a plant of slow growth. It grows imperceptibly but surely. And even at the risk of being misunderstood, I must act in obedience to 'the still small voice.'"

"Some Muslim friends tell me," he wrote, "that the Muslims will not subscribe to unadulterated non-violence. With them, they say, violence is as lawful and necessary as non-violence. The use of either depends upon circumstances. It does not need Koranic authority to justify the lawfulness of both. That is the well-known path the world has traversed through the ages. There is no such thing as unadulterated violence in the world. But then I have heard it from many Muslim friends that the Holy Koran teaches the use of non-violence. It regards forbearance as superior to vengeance. The very word Islam means peace, which is non-violence. Badshah Khan, a staunch Muslim, has accepted out-and-out non-violence as his creed. . ."

In the same issue of *Harijan*, dated October 7, Gandhi wrote:

"A Pathan who met me during the journey, talking about the violent deeds said: 'You know the Government is strong enough to put down any violence however organized it may be in our country, but your non-violence is canny. You have given our country a wonderful weapon. No Government in the world can put down non-violence.' I complimented my visitor on the striking thought he gave me. In one sentence he presented the matchless beauty of non-violence. If only India can understand the full implications of the remark so naturally, so effortlessly made by the Pathan friend, India will become unconquerable in the face of any combination of invaders. Ten to one, there will be no raid on a people trained in non-violence. Indeed, the weakest state can render itself immune from attack, if it learns the art of non-violence. But a small state, no matter how powerfully armed it is, cannot exist in the midst of a powerful combination of well-armed states. It has to be absorbed by, or be under the protection of, one of the members of such a combination. Well does Badshah Khan say: 'We would have fared ill if we had not learnt the lesson of non-violence. We have taken it up quite selfishly. We are born fighters and we keep the tradition by fighting among ourselves. Once a murder takes place in a family or a clan, it becomes a point of honour to avenge it. There is no such thing generally, as forgiveness among us. And so, there is avenging and re-avenging and re-re-avenging. And thus, the vicious circle never ends. This non-violence has come to us as a positive deliverance.' What is true of the Frontier Province is true of all of us. Without knowing it, we move in the vicious circle of violence. A little reflection and corresponding practice should enable us to get out of the circle."

On October 17, 1939 Lord Linlithgow made a declaration which implicitly accepted the Muslim League's claim to speak for the Muslims of India. He renewed the pledge that dominion status was the objective of the British policy in India. To that end, the Act of 1935 would be

reconsidered after the war with due regard for the opinions of all the minorities. And as to immediate action, he proposed the establishment of an advisory council, representing all India, to associate the Indian public opinion with the prosecution of the war.

"The Viceregal declaration is profoundly disappointing," observed Gandhi. The Congress Working Committee called upon the Congress ministries to resign as a protest against India being declared a belligerent country without her consent and the persistent refusal of the British Government to apply in her case the principles for which the war was professed to be fought. In obedience to that call, the Congress ministry in the Frontier Province resigned in November. No alternative ministry could be formed following upon its resignation, and the Governor's rule was thrust upon the province.

At the termination of the Working Committee meeting, Gandhi asked the members to consider the question of non-violence in all its details. The question had been engaging all his time, so much so that Gandhi had gone into complete silence, except with such people whom he saw by appointment, and often he woke up in the early hours of the morning thinking about it. "This was a very difficult time for Gandhiji," notes Maulana Azad. "He saw that the war was devastating and he could do nothing to prevent it. He was so distressed that on several occasions he even spoke of suicide. He told me that if he was powerless to stop the suffering caused by the war, he could at least refuse to be a witness to it by putting an end to his life."

On October 24, Gandhi revealed in an editorial that the control and management of civil disobedience had been left by the Congress Working Committee in his hands. Addressing the countrymen to be prepared for the worst, he wrote:

"The Working Committee's resolution, if it is evidence of Congress earnestness in vindicating India's freedom, is also a test of the Congress discipline and non-violence. Though nothing is said in the resolution, the control and management of civil disobedience has been left in my hands at the will of the committee. Needless to say, I have no sanction, and never had any, save the willing and knowing obedience of the vast mass of the Congressmen, registered or unregistered, to the instructions issued to them through the committee or through *Harijan*. When, therefore, I find my instructions have no running power, Congressmen will find me retiring from the field without ado. But if I am to retain the general control of the struggle, I shall want the strictest adherence to discipline. So far as I can see, there is no possibility of civil resistance on a large scale unless the Congressmen show perfect discipline and greater appreciation than hitherto of non-violence and truth."

On November 1, 1939 Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, and Jinnah, the Muslim League President, had a joint interview with the Viceroy about the British Government's proposal for expanding the Executive Council. The Congress leaders declined to consider any steps to further co-operation unless the policy of the British Government was made implicit in a declaration on the lines suggested by the Congress, and they protested against the communal question being dragged in so as to cloud the main issue. The British interference on the matter had only made a settlement more difficult. This attitude on the part of the Congress leaders, asserted Jinnah, precluded any discussion between them and him. Thus the dead-lock was created and the Viceroy came out with a statement. Gandhi's comment was:

"... The pronouncements hitherto made, whether here or in Great Britain, are after the old style, suspected and discredited by freedom-loving India. If imperialism is dead, there must be a clear break with the past. Language suited to the new era has to be used. If the time has not yet come for the acceptance of this fundamental truth, I would urge that further effort at reaching a solution should be suspended. In this connection I would remind British statesmen that what is wanted is a declaration of Britain's intention regarding her Indian policy, irrespective of India's wishes. A slave-holder who has decided to abolish slavery, does not consult his slaves whether they desire freedom or not."

The Muslim League acquiesced in the League ministries continuing their full participation in the war effort, but otherwise it made its co-operation with the Government conditional on its refusal to agree to the Congress plan for the settlement of the future constitution. Jinnah sprang a surprise in the shape of Deliverance Day to be observed by the Muslims on Friday, December 22, 1939. He appealed to the Muslims to observe the day as one of thanksgiving that the Congress Government had at last ceased to function. Meetings were to be held to celebrate the "Day of Deliverance" from "tyranny, oppression and injustice" during the last thirty months, when the Congress, it was alleged, did its best to flout Muslim opinion, destroy Muslim culture, and interfered with their religious and social life and trampled upon their political rights.

Gandhi appealed to Jinnah to call off the Deliverance Day. Jinnah argued that Gandhi had taken upon his shoulders tremendous responsibility of being both the accuser and the judge. Sardar Patel repudiated the allegations made by Jinnah. He stated that when the Muslim League through the Pirpur Committee first made the charges against the Congress ministries, he instructed them to inquire into each allegation and submit a report. And these reports showed that the charges were absolutely unfounded. Some months later, Rajendra Prasad, the Congress

President, offered to submit the charges, if specified, to an independent tribunal for an inquiry, but Jinnah spurned the offer, stating that he had placed the charges before the Viceroy. When Jinnah had repeated the charges, Patel had instructed the ministers to invite their Governors' attention to them, as they were also affected by the charges, and he was informed that the Governors considered the charges as unwarranted. He was constrained to characterize the charges as wild and reckless and intended to endanger communal peace.

Maulana Azad raised his voice against the Deliverance Day: "And now, when the Congress has given up the government of eight provinces of its own choice and free will, what advice has the League President to offer to the Muslims? It is this that they should march towards the mosques and thank God on their deliverance from Congress ministries which have preferred duty to power and have resigned not only on the issue of India's freedom but for the rights of all downtrodden peoples of the East. It is difficult to imagine that any group of Muslims, howsoever at loggerheads with the Indian National Congress, would tolerate to be presented to the world in such colours."

In December 1939, the Working Committee met at Wardha and reiterated its stand taken at its last meeting. The concluding part of the resolution stated: "The Congressmen must have by now realized that independence is not to be won without very hard work. And since the Congress is pledged to non-violence, the final sanction behind it is civil resistance, which is but a part of satyagraha. Satyagraha means goodwill towards all, especially towards the opponents. Therefore, it is the duty of individual Congressmen to promote and seek goodwill. The success of the programme of khaddar as an accepted symbol of non-violence, harmony and economic independence, is indispensable."

After attending the Working Committee meeting, in a press interview, Abdul Ghaffar said that communal unity could not be brought about by mere talk. Thorns had sprung up in the path of unity. Mere talk could not remove them and render the path of unity smooth. The only way was by means of striving for a genuine change of mentality and of heart among the masses and not merely among a few at the top who were vocal. Prolonged and patient work right in the midst of the masses can bring about this unity.

A Baffling Situation

1940

On the eve of the annual session of the Congress at Ramgarh in Bihar, in March 1940, the Working Committee, at Patna, decided to recommend to the Subjects Committee only the following resolution:

". . . The recent pronouncements on behalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the Congress cannot in any way, directly or indirectly, be party to the war, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation . . .

"The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of Complete Independence can be accepted by the people of India. Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of imperialism, and dominion status, or any other status, within the imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with the dignity of a great nation, and would bind India in many ways to British policies and economic structure. The people of India alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations to the other countries of the world through a constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

"The Congress is further of opinion that while it will always be ready, as it ever has been, to make every effort to secure communal harmony, no permanent solution is possible except through a constituent assembly, where the rights of all recognized minorities will be fully protected by agreement, as far as possible, between the elected representatives of various majority and minority groups, or by arbitration if agreement is not reached on any point. Any alternative will lack finality. India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiates attempts to divide India or split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual and social injustice yields place to a juster social order.

"The Congress cannot admit the right of the rulers of Indian states or of foreign vested interests, to come in the way of Indian freedom. Sovereignty in India must rest with the people . . .

"The Congress seeks to represent and serve all classes and communities without distinction of race or religion, and the struggle for Indian independence is for the freedom of the whole nation. Hence, the Congress cherishes the hope that all classes and communities will take part in it. The purpose of civil disobedience is to evoke the spirit of sacrifice in the whole nation. . ."

At Ramgarh, Gandhi asked the members of the Working Committee to enlighten him on three questions: First, what should the Congress stand be if they were confronted with the demand for a division of India into Hindu India and Muslim India? Secondly, was the country prepared for civil disobedience? And last, what was their precise conception of constituent assembly?

Abdul Ghaffar said: "If civil disobedience is confined to jail-going many are prepared for this in the Frontier. But civil disobedience is not jail-going only. Those who go to jail do not understand its significance. I doubt if we are worthy of the cause for which we want to fight. The little power that came to us revealed in true colours those whom we considered angels. It is astounding the amount of corruption I saw about me when we came to possess a little power. Civil disobedience is a dangerous thing unless we first create a set of men who will prove worthy of freedom when achieved. We must purify ourselves and purify the others."

Sardar Patel said: "We have no clear conception of the constituent assembly. If it is a revolutionary project, it was foolish to ask for a declaration of war and peace aims. We visualized the British co-operation; else we should have fought. The war gave increased prominence to the communal problem. If the Muslims want a division of India, we may say 'yes'. Only the Hindus will not accept it.

"The forces of violence and indiscipline are on the increase. But how long will the stalemate continue? I do not see any prospect of strengthening our preparations. There is danger from the Muslim League. The princes too are a danger spot. There is a secret agreement between the two. We should not, therefore, be stampeded into a campaign of civil resistance."

Jawaharlal Nehru said: "The question about the division of India is wrongly posed. It will be fatal to discuss this question now. It will encourage all manner of separatist and disruptive forces.

"The question is: should we prefer the Muslim rule to British rule? I won't take British assistance to suppress the Musalmans. But we must find a way to meet the obstructive communal tactics.

"There can be no constituent assembly unless the British power is completely withdrawn. In this constituent assembly we either settle the

communal problem or face a civil war. If the British protection is there in some form, the communal problem will be exploited. The first demand of the constituent assembly should be complete withdrawal of the British troops. A new and powerful organ of government will replace the British machinery. If there is a real constituent assembly, men like Jinnah will not be able to function effectively. They are afraid of it and of adult suffrage. If we cannot take active steps, we may wait."

Rajendra Prasad said: "The idea of constituent assembly took shape in Lucknow. It was in answer to the question what will satisfy us. The essence of the idea was self-determination as against the Round Table Conference method. The idea received prominence in the war crisis. It was always presented as a substitute for what the British Government offered. It was not conceived as a revolutionary plan. The Patna resolution has limited the scope of the constituent assembly. How will it come into being? As a result of world pressure and our internal strength, the British Government may come to an understanding with us on a mutually acceptable basis. As things are, we do not envisage complete disappearance of the British power. Constituent assembly will settle details and touch up the framework of the agreement.

"If there is a dead-lock in the constituent assembly, political or communal, what will happen I do not know. The British Government will remain a deciding factor. There will be civil war if the differences are fundamental."

Rajagopalachari said: "I do not see any revolutionary foundation for the constituent assembly. An orderly assembly must necessarily be based on an orderly and strong government. Complete removal of the British Government as a condition precedent of the convening of the constituent assembly will make for confusion and complications. We shall not be able to produce an alternative arrangement. We may not expect a wholesale surrender of the British Government. It goes against human nature.

"We will be crushed if civil disobedience is started. It will be a setback to the clock. The technique of defence against civil disobedience has been perfected. We may have to wait for one year or more, for a suitable atmosphere to be created. Any hasty action may result in complete demoralization. Labour troubles will lead to violence and there will be communal discord."

Maulana Azad said: "The constituent assembly when it was first broached was a form of India's demand for freedom. It presupposes revolutionary change of some kind in the existing situation, but it does not rule out an understanding with the British Government. While, it does not necessarily involve withdrawal of British power, it does involve

a revolutionary change in the British mind. This is what we have been aiming at. We want Britishers to accept our demand and withdraw its opposition.

"Non-violence can take us very far. We need indeed set no limits to it if the weapon of non-violence is perfect. Our strength will determine the efficacy of the weapon. The war situation and our internal strength, their difficulties and other considerations, give us an opportunity for self-determination of some kind and not complete independence. I don't think that unless some extraordinary external upheaval occurs, we can oblige them to accept our full demand. Our present strength is limited. As things are, we cannot have before us a definite picture of the struggle ahead as we had in 1930. The natural sequel of the Patna resolution is civil disobedience or active preparations for it. There can be no going back on the decision we have taken. The Government has given its answer. We have only to decide the form we must give to our fight."

Gandhi said: "I want to give you a picture of what I understand by constituent assembly. In the transition period, we will lay down no conditions for the British Government. The army will remain and so will their administrative machinery. There will be an agreement with the British Government before and after the constituent assembly. If we are in a minority, we will accept the decisions of the constituent assembly, whatever they be, for discipline's sake, if for nothing else. If they want the army to remain, we shall not resist. I may not even press for the withdrawal of the army if a minority wants it. If impossible demands are put forward, we will have to submit to them. If corrupt men come and spoil the show we are helpless. The larger the scale of franchise for the constituent assembly the better. Mutual goodwill is necessary for the constituent assembly to come into being and function efficiently. Without this, the British Government may very well use the princes and the Muslims as counterweight against us.

"All that I have heard from you has strengthened my belief that the country is not ready for civil disobedience. I do not see much chance of improving our preparations. Whatever has been done in U.P. is good. But I cannot evolve non-violence from the awakening created there by Jawaharlalji. Khadi will create non-violent strength in the people. I have no doubt that we can get complete independence through non-violence. I can fight a whole world with a small disciplined Congress, the big Congress we have is unwieldly. If civil disobedience is started, 'disobedience' will remain, and 'civil' disappear. As things are, I dare not start civil disobedience. I may find a way out if my present relation with the Congress is severed. I cannot leave my programme. I am not obstinate. I am given no alternative programme. I cannot produce a

non-violent army from the agitation that is created by propaganda. The people have to be disciplined by work. Such an army will not go astray. Non-violence in the masses can be easily created.

"Sir Maurice Gwyer said to Bhulabhai in an interview with him that Gandhi has grown stiffer about the goal. It is true. I do not find any honest response from the other side. Inside the country, I have my difficulties. I find no suitable material for fight. I shall not start a fight unless my conditions are fulfilled. I don't want the people to be crushed. If a fight is launched without proper preparations, it is the poor who will suffer. I had to withdraw from Rajkot as there was no internal strength. Whatever strength there was, was theatrical in character. My withdrawal was a great service to the people of Rajkot; but for it there would have been reaction and suffering. I don't want to do anything which will bring about demoralization. If the struggle is started and discipline is slack and every group does what it likes, there will be disaster and the cause will suffer. Everybody admits that there is indiscipline in the Congress and yet everybody participates in it. I do not mind if people get demoralized on account of waiting.

"An alternative course occurs to me. I should be freed from the burden of my connection with you, and you go ahead. I will keep myself in reserve. If necessary, I may join later. I may be a broken reed and may land you into unexpected troubles. I might not begin the movement for an indefinite length of time. And I might stop it abruptly. However much you may agree with me, your ahimsa does not go as far as mine. And if after twenty years of practice of it I have not been able to win the affection and trust of the Musalmans, my ahimsa must be of a very poor quality, indeed. Why not then let me further examine myself and make further researches in non-violence?"

Turning to Maulana Azad he said: "I have not the slightest doubt that the Congress and the nation can have nothing to lose and everything to gain by the step. There is no question of my distrusting you or other members of the Working Committee or the nation. It is a question of my distrust in myself. I am sure that, if you release me, I may be able to give civil disobedience a purer and nobler shape."

But the Maulana demurred. He somehow could not reconcile himself to the proposal. "You must not forget," he said, "that it was at your command that I accepted to serve this year. One cannot think of civil disobedience without you."

Rajagopalachari inquired: "Is civil disobedience the only way? Can we not try another method? If we think our strength is small, we must relate our demand to our strength."

Gandhi said: "I have not given up the idea of resistance, but I don't

find any suitable atmosphere for it. The man who has tried the experiment throughout his whole life will certainly try it once again. But I have to carry on my shoulders the burden of the Congress organization. I will not think in terms of this organization, if you release me. I can start the struggle when I find my men ready. I may even do it alone at a pinch. This is what I did at Champaran. I did not have behind me then the prestige and the influence of the Congress. I am giving you my mind as it is necessary that you should know my position. The resolution is not yet passed."

Azad: "Your always telling the people that they are not ready for a fight demoralizes them."

Gandhi: "If it does, I cannot help. I cannot lower the demand. We are asking for a constituent assembly today. I am no more talking in terms of dominion status. That has not been the Congress position. The Britishers are unwilling to go even so far. I am, however, giving up that position now."

Jawaharlal: "I look at things differently. The position is that we are repelling the attack. Therefore, the question of preparation does not arise. We have to fight and meet the attack. The only question is how best to meet it. A mere declaration to fight will not do. But certain steps are to be taken which will inevitably involve us in a struggle."

At Ramgarh, on March 17, Rajendra Prasad moved the resolution on "India and the war crisis", which the Working Committee at Patna had adopted. It was passed by a majority of 2,500 to 15.

For the first time during the last six years, since his retirement from the Congress, Gandhi expressed a keen desire to address the delegates. "There is no civil disobedience," he said, "until I feel that you are ready. It is the thought of mass civil disobedience that keeps my mind awake all the twenty-four hours. You have to purify every Congress committee and make it a satyagraha unit. To that extent, it will have to cease to be a democracy, because my word will be law. But, if it does not become such a unit, then millions of our dumb countrymen will be sacrificed. None of my campaigns has crushed or ruined the masses. They have increased their stature, and it is in order to take it higher that I want to live. There was in the earlier campaigns, enough of violence of thought and word, but there was non-violence in act, and, therefore, masses were saved. I would not light-heartedly imperil those masses today, and that is why I insist on the strictest non-violence and the fulfilment of my conditions. For that is the only link that binds them and me. And if I am your general, your pulse should be in my hands. Otherwise, I cannot fight through you. I can fight single-handed, but for that fight I need not come and argue with you."

President Azad dwelt on the Hindu-Muslim unity and the minority problem. He scouted the idea that the Muslims were in a minority, and the democratic institutions in India would, therefore, jeopardize their interests and existence. "If the country has two major groups," he said, "numbering a million and two millions respectively, it does not necessarily follow that because one group is half the other, therefore, it must call itself a minority and consider itself weak." Islam has a great claim on the soil of India as Hinduism, he emphasized. "If Hinduism has been the religion of the people here for several thousands of years, Islam also has been their religion for a thousand years. Just as a Hindu can declare with pride that he is an Indian and follow Hinduism, so also we can claim with equal pride that we are Indians and we follow Islam. The Indian Christian is equally entitled to say with pride that he is an Indian and he is following a religion of India, namely, Christianity."

"Do we, the Indian Muslims," Azad asked, "view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence? If we view it with fear and suspicion, then undoubtedly we have to follow a different path. No present declaration and no promise for the future and no constitutional safeguards can be a remedy for our doubts and fears. We are then forced to tolerate the existence of a third power. This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing, and if we follow this path of fear, we must needs look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world, which is free from the dark shadows of doubt and vacillation, and where the light of faith and determination never fails. The confusions of the times, the ups and downs that come our way, the difficulties that beset our thorny path, cannot change the direction of our steps. It becomes then our bounden duty to march with assured steps to India's national goal."

In March, 1940, the Muslim League passed the Pakistan resolution at Lahore: "Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated in regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'independent states' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign . . ."

In his presidential address, Jinnah harped on "two nations" theory. The present unity of India, Jinnah said, was artificial, dating from the British period and maintained by British bayonet. He declared that democracy was unsuited to India and that "the Muslims are a nation and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state."

In April there gathered in Delhi representatives of various Muslim parties—the Congress Muslims, Ahrars, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind, Shia Political Conference—virtually all Muslim groups except the Muslim League and the Khaksars. Allah Baksh, the Premier of Sind, presided over the Azad Muslim Conference. The delegates came mainly to protest against the Pakistan idea and against the use made of the Muslims by the British Government and others as an excuse for political inaction. They supported the Congress demand for the constituent assembly and they adopted a resolution condemning the demand for the partition put forward by the Muslim League. "India, with her geographical and her political boundaries, is an indivisible whole. All the nooks and corners of the country contain the hearths and homes of the Muslims and the cherished historic monuments of their religion and culture, which are dearer to them than their own lives. From the national point of view, every Muslim is an Indian." It declared the Muslim determination to fight shoulder to shoulder with their other countrymen for the attainment of complete independence.

Commenting on the Pakistan resolution, Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan* dated April 6, 1940:

"I admit that the step taken by the Muslim League at Lahore creates a baffling situation. But I do not regard it so baffling as to make civil disobedience an impossibility. Supposing that the Congress is reduced to a hopeless minority, it will still be open to it and, indeed, it may be its duty to resort to civil disobedience. The struggle will not be against the majority, but it will be against the foreign ruler. If the struggle succeeds, the fruits thereof will be reaped as well by the Congress as by the opposing majority. Let me, however, declare in parenthesis, that until the conditions I have mentioned for the starting of civil disobedience are fulfilled, civil disobedience cannot be started in any case. In the present instance, there is nothing to prevent the imperial rulers from declaring their will in unequivocal terms that, henceforth, India will govern herself according to her own will, not that of the rulers as has happened hitherto. Neither the Muslim League nor any other party, can oppose such a declaration. For, the Muslims will be entitled to dictate their own terms. Unless the rest of India wishes to engage in internal fratricide, the others will have to submit to the Muslim dictation, if the Muslims will resort to it. I know no non-violent method

of compelling the obedience of eight crores of Muslims to the will of the rest of India, however powerful the rest may represent. The Muslims must have the same right of self-determination that the rest of India has. We are at present a joint family. Any member may claim a division.

"Thus, so far as I am concerned, my proposition that there is no swaraj without communal unity holds as good today as when I first enunciated it in 1919.

"But civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It is open even to one single person to offer civil disobedience if he feels the call. It will not be offered by the Congress alone or for any particular group. Whatever benefit accrues from it, will belong to the whole of India. The injury, if there is any, will belong only to the civil disobedience party.

"But I do not believe that the Muslims, when it comes to a matter of actual decision, will ever want vivisection. Their good sense will prevent them. Their religion will forbid the obvious suicide, which the partition would mean. The 'two nations' theory is an untruth. The vast majority of Muslims of India are converts to Islam or are the descendants of the converts. They did not become a separate nation as soon as they became the converts. A Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food and has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike. I have often found it difficult to distinguish by outward sign between a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali Muslim. The same phenomenon is observable, more or less, in the south among the poor who constitute the masses of India. When I first met the late Sir Ali Imam, I did not know that he was not a Hindu. His speech, his dress, his manners, his food, were the same as of the majority of the Hindus in whose midst I found him. His name alone betrayed him. Not even that with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. For his name could be that of any Hindu. When I first met him, I did not know that he was a Muslim. I came to know his religion when his full name was given to me. His nationality was written in his face and in his manner. The reader will be surprised to know that for days, if not months, I used to think of the late Vithalbhai Patel as a Muslim, as he used to sport a beard and a Turkish cap. The Hindu law of inheritance governs many Muslim groups. Sir Muhammad Iqbal used to speak with pride of his Brahmanical descent. Iqbal and Kitchlew are names common to Hindus and Muslims. Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations. Those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.

"And is Islam such an exclusive religion as Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah would have it? Is there nothing in common between Islam and Hinduism or any other religion? Or is Islam merely an enemy of Hinduism? Were the Ali brothers and their associates wrong when they hugged

the Hindus as blood brothers and saw so much in common between the two? I am not now thinking of individual Hindus who may have disillusioned the Muslim friends. The Qaid-e-Azam has, however, raised a fundamental issue. This is his thesis: 'It is extremely difficult why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and of Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but they are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and the Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. This misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our trouble and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and the Muslims have two different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together, and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are quite different. It is quite clear that the Hindus and the Muslims derive inspiration from different sources of history. They have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.'

"He does not say that some Hindus are bad; he says Hindus as such have nothing in common with Muslims. I make bold to say that he and those who think like him are rendering no service to Islam. They are misinterpreting the message inherent in the very word Islam. I say this because I feel deeply hurt over what is now going on in the name of the Muslim League. I should be failing in my duty if I did not warn the Muslims of India against the untruth that is being propagated amongst them. And this warning is a duty because I have faithfully served them in their hour of need and because Hindu-Muslim unity has been and is my life's mission."

"As a man of non-violence," Gandhi wrote in reply to Liaquat Ali Khan, "I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God. For, I believe with my whole soul that the God of the Koran is also the God of the Gita and that we are all,

no matter by what name designated, children of the same God. I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were the Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion.

"But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of those Muslims who think that they are a different nation. I refuse, however, to believe that the eight crores of Muslims will declare that they have nothing in common with their Hindu and other brethren. Their mind can only be known by a referendum made to them duly on that clear issue. The contemplated constituent assembly can easily decide the question. Naturally on an issue such as this, there can be no arbitration. It is purely a matter of self-determination. I know of no other conclusive method of ascertaining the mind of the eight crores of Muslims."

On April 18, the Working Committee met to consider the situation in the country as it had developed since the Ramgarh Congress. Discussing the present political situation, Gandhi stressed that the letters he was receiving from all over the country indicated that there was no atmosphere for the starting of the struggle. In Bengal and the Punjab, the struggle will not be against the British, but against the respective ministries. People ask him what next. Some want to know if they were to leave their government jobs and join in the preparation. He was telling everybody to keep ready. He was in no hurry. Some people ask if he could commence the struggle in spite of the attitude of the Muslim League and the Khaksars.

Congressmen, he continued, told him that there was neither honesty nor discipline in the Congress and there was no belief in the constructive programme. All this did not encourage him to issue a word of command for the struggle. Talking of the international situation, he said, that did not affect him. His gaze was centered on the internal situation and that was not very hopeful. Some people asked if he would sit still and allow the present opportunity to pass off. His reply was that he was helpless unless conditions precedent were fulfilled.

Jawaharlal Nehru stated that all this was known at the time of the Ramgarh resolution. Nothing new had happened since. The resolution contemplated struggle if there was goading from the Government. He felt that the Government was acting slowly but surely. It was trying to see how much we would bear and was pushing forward with its repression. True, first-rank leaders were not touched, but there were plenty of arrests, specially in U. P. of second-rank leaders. He asked if Gandhiji was contemplating a non-mass struggle. Supposing 50,000 satyagrahis were enrolled and he began the fight, would that be a mass struggle?

Gandhi's reply was that he did not think that Government was bent upon goading. If he felt so, he would not wait for numbers. He would

begin with a few. Participation of even 50,000 satyagrahis will not make the action a mass struggle. Mass meant indefinite numbers. However, if 50,000 satyagrahis offer themselves, it may mean that the door for mass civil disobedience has been opened.

Jawaharlal said that the goading at present may not be sufficient but it will go on increasing. Shall not the nation prepare to resist it? He was not prepared to say that action may be immediately precipitated. But it was a fact that the country was being pushed back. Government want to see how far they can go without exciting us into action. He thought the masses were ready, but the intermediate links were weak. He asked Gandhi what the latter would do if he got 50,000 satyagrahis.

Gandhi's reply was that even then communal and other difficulties may make action difficult. He wanted members to consider the question of the struggle in connection with the attitude of the Muslim League and terrorist activities of the Khaksars.

Dr. Syed Mahmud said that there was need to analyse the Muslim opposition to Congress. He had no doubt the nationalist Muslims had not discharged their duties properly. Yet, that was not the only cause which had produced the present tension. The nationalist Muslims had to work with their own resources. He felt that Congress organization or Congressmen were largely responsible for the present state of affairs. The whole question was to be understood in its historic perspective. The process of Hindu assimilation of Muslim culture had been going on in India for centuries and the process was continuing. Today, there was nothing in India which was distinctly Muslim. Every reform movement in India brought about further assimilation. Gandhiji's reforms also meant more Hindu revival than anything else. In his scheme of reforms, there was no place for Muslims. The Congress was also guided by the spirit of Hindu revival. His experience was that whatever efforts were made to do anything for the Muslims, they were resisted by Hindu Congressmen.

Asaf Ali said that many Muslims asked questions which it was not always easy to reply. For instance, the Muslims asked why great leaders who were previously in the Congress, had ceased to be in the Congress. Why, again, Iqbal's song, "Hindustan Hamara", is no more sung at the Congress meetings and only "Bande Mataram" is sung. They also ask what Congress had done for the Muslims during the last twenty years. It had done so much for the untouchables. After all the Harijan uplift meant Hindu unity. Then there was the question of Hindi and Urdu.

Maulana Azad thought that Congress organization, as such, could never be blamed for having taken sides in communal matters. From his personal experience in the Parliamentary Subcommittee he could say

that there was no injustice done to the Muslims as such by the Congress ministry. There may be cases of individual injustice, but that was not due to communal reasons, but because human nature is everywhere weak and such individual injustice cannot be avoided under the best circumstances.

Gandhi again requested the members to give him the benefit of their opinion about the starting of civil disobedience, taking into consideration the opinions expressed by Dr. Syed Mahmud and Mr. Asaf Ali in addition to the attitude of the Muslim League and the Khaksars. The Khaksars wanted to terrorize the Hindus. His advice to Hindus would be to fight this menace non-violently. This he could not do under the present circumstances from the Congress platform.

Jawaharlal Nehru was of the opinion that these troubles should not deter the Congress from starting the movement.

Rajendra Prasad was quite certain that the Congress was not in conflict with Muslims. But the recent resolution of the League meant civil war. The whole attitude of the League towards the Congress was that any movement started at present would mean ultimately an accession of strength to the Congress. Such an accession of strength would undermine the League influence. Any conflict with the British Government would, therefore, indirectly be a quarrel with the Muslim League and, therefore, the League would resist it. Under such circumstances, mass civil disobedience would mean civil war.

Sardar Patel was of the opinion that unless some sort of action was taken there was bound to be demoralization in Congress ranks.

Rajagopalachari was definitely of the view that there was no atmosphere for a fight. The Congress must not be obsessed with the idea of prestige in deciding the issue. If it had gone too fast, it must retrace its steps. Its demands must be modulated to its strength and the support it will get from the public; of this latter he was very sceptical. He was sure that we would not achieve our objective this time by starting the movement. All factors pointed to the failure of the movement.

Asaf Ali thought the aim of the national struggle was swaraj. But at present there was division among the people about this too. The majority of the Muslims were with the League. Many of them did not understand the issues but they thought something good will happen by their joining the League. He thought that the Muslims, the Hindus and the liberals were against the Congress and what remained were the idealists who could not be expected to care for the result of the fight. They were likely to neglect practical considerations. He felt that the country will have to wait for a more favourable opportunity to start a movement.

Jawaharlal's opinion was that the struggle would bring out the better

nature of the people. Without it there will be disorganization and demoralization. Struggle could not be avoided by sitting still.

Maulana Azad's opinion was that Gandhiji was exaggerating the importance of and the strength of the Khaksars. Their leader was an egoist who wanted to keep himself before the public eye anyhow. He was whimsical, lacked idealism, and has proved himself weak at the time of the trial. The general public respect the Congress. If its policy was to be influenced by the doings of the Khaksars, their game will be played and they will become worse bullies than now. Their importance will also increase. As for the movement, Azad said, the Congress was not writing on a clean slate. It could not change its policies in midstream. No doubt the country was weak and divided, but that should have been thought before. It was too late now and something must be done.

Gandhi did not agree with Azad in his analysis of the Khaksars. He said that the Government this time would not be quick to repress but will allow time to the opposition forces like the League and the Khaksars to complicate the situation. When that happened, his fear was that the people will be cowed down. And, even if they acted, they would do so violently. He would also not like, if he could help it, to irritate the Muslims by starting the movement. He did not agree with Maulana Saheb and Jawaharlalji. He thought that there could be no mass civil disobedience. It was not possible at present to have any corporate nonviolence, which meant that all orders must be strictly obeyed and carried out. If there is disobedience and interference, there can be no mass movement. The masses are connected with the movement, but that connection is indirect. If there was proper discipline, he did not see any reason why individual civil disobedience must necessarily develop into mass civil disobedience.

It was possible that the Congress may succeed if it started the movement, that is, the Government may accede to Congress demands. But that, today, will only mean that the Muslims are ignored. He did not want such a settlement or such a swaraj. He had respect for Muslim religion. He was not prepared to say that the League did not represent the Muslim mind. If Muslims want separation, he will not oppose. When they have it, he will oppose them non-violently. He knew in this matter the nation would not accept his lead and there will be civil war. He was, however, hoping that at such a time the Congress at least would be with him and would declare that it would be no party to either the coercion of Muslims or to seeking British protection.

On June 17, France fell. The Congress Working Committee which on the same day met at Wardha, did some fierce thinking. On June 21st the committee announced that they were unable to extend the creed

of non-violence to national defence. "The problems which were distant are now near at hand and may soon demand solution. The problem of the achievement of the national freedom has now to be considered along with the one of its maintenance and the defence of the country against the possible external and internal disorder."

The Wardha decision left the Working Committee free to take the political decisions without having to think in terms of violence and non-violence. "Mahatma Gandhi," the resolution stated, "desires the Congress to be true to the creed of non-violence and to declare its unwillingness that India should maintain armed forces to defend her freedom against external aggression or internal disorder." The committee "are unable to go to the full length with Gandhiji; but they recognize that he should be free to pursue his great ideal in his own way and, therefore, absolve him from responsibility for the programme and the activity which the Congress has to pursue," namely, the parallel organization of self-defence and the maintenance of public security throughout the country by the Congressmen on their own and in full co-operation with the sympathetic groups. The committee further said that India's struggle for independence must continue on its non-violent course. The war committees aimed at increasing war effort, therefore, must not be supported. No Congressman must contribute to war funds or enlist in civil guards under official control.

"Try your best to do without me and have your meetings in future not in Wardha but elsewhere," Gandhi told the Working Committee.

A Cry In The Wilderness

1940

Again the Viceroy sent for Gandhi and had an interview at Simla on June 29, 1940. From Delhi, on July 1, Gandhi wrote:

". . . The very first thing that everyone has to consider for himself is whether dominion status of the Westminster variety can be acceptable to India. If it has not become a myth already, it will be at the end of the war. Britain herself, victorious or defeated, will never be the same as she has been for these few hundred years. But this much is certain that her defeat, if it must come, will certainly be glorious. If Britain is defeated, she will be because no other power similarly situated could have avoided defeat. I cannot say the same of her victory. It will be bought by the progressive adoption of the same means as the totalitarian states have adopted. I must say with the deepest pain that the British statesmen have rejected the only moral influence they could have easily got from the Congress to turn the scales in Britain's favour. It is no blame to her statesmen that they have not availed themselves of that influence. They did not see the need of it. It may well be that they did not perceive the moral influence itself which I have claimed for the Congress. Whatever may be the case, it is clear to me that India's immediate objective must be unadulterated independence. This is no time for mincing words or hiding our thoughts. I cannot think of anyone wanting less than independence for this country, if he can get it. No country has ever got it without its people having fought for it. Anyway, the Congress made up its mind long ago. Even if India is to render effective help to Britain, it can come from free India. . .

"The next question for consideration is that of providing for disorder and external invasion. The raising of the private armies will be worse than useless. It will never be allowed. No power, whether foreign or swadeshi, can tolerate private armies. Those, therefore, who believe in the necessity of India having armed force will sooner or later be driven to enlist themselves under the British banner. It is the logical outcome of the belief. The Working Committee have taken the decision on the point. If it is to abide, I have little doubt that the committee will presently have to advise the Congressmen to enlist in the usual way. That would mean an end also to non-violence of the true brand. I shall hope to the last for the sake of themselves, India, aye, Britain herself, and humanity, Congressmen will resolutely decline to have anything to do

with the use of arms for any of the two purposes. I feel strongly that the future of humanity lies in the hands of the Congress. May God give wisdom and courage to Congressmen to take the right step!"

On July 3 Gandhi published his famous appeal "To Every Briton":

"I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may be now, to accept the method of non-violence instead of that of war for the adjustment of relations between nations and other matters . . . I appeal for cessation of hostilities, not because you are too exhausted to fight but because war is bad in essence . . . I venture to present you with a nobler and a braver way, worthy of the bravest soldier. I want you to fight Nazism without arms or, if I am to retain the military terminology, with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these but neither your souls nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child, to be slaughtered but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them . . ."

An emergency meeting of the Working Committee was held in Delhi on July 3. "We were affected by the world-shaking events outside," notes Maulana Azad. "Even more disturbing were the differences among ourselves. I was the Congress President and sought to take India into the camp of democracies if only India were free. The cause of democracy was one for which Indians felt strongly. The only obstacle in our way was India's bondage. For Gandhiji, however, it was not so. For him the issue was one of pacifism and not of India's freedom. I declared openly that the Indian National Congress was not a pacifist organization but one for achieving India's freedom. To my mind, therefore, the issue raised by Gandhiji was irrelevant. Gandhiji, however, would not change his view. He was convinced that India ought not to take part in the war in any circumstances. For me, non-violence was a matter of policy, not of creed. My view was that Indians had the right to take to the sword if they had no other alternative. It would, however, be nobler to achieve independence through peaceful methods, and in any case in the circumstances which obtained in the country, Gandhiji's method was right.

"The Congress Working Committee was divided on this basic issue. In the earlier stages, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajagopalachari and Abdul Ghaffar Khan sided with me. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya Kripalani and Shankarrao Deo were, however, whole-heartedly with

Gandhiji. They agreed with him that once it was accepted that free India could participate in war, the very basis of India's non-violent struggle for freedom would disappear. I, on the other hand, felt that struggle for freedom was one thing and to fight after the country became free was another. I held that the two issues should not be confused."

The Working Committee discussion on the political situation was in detail and frank.

Gandhi stated: "I have been oppressed all the time by the fact that I now represent totally different mentality from that of the Working Committee. When I asked for absolution it was not a formal thing. My article in the *Harijan* is the true picture of my mind. I put the same thing to the Viceroy. I told him that this was the last interview. He should send for the President of the Congress if he must have an offer on behalf of the Congress. I think in the course of days he will invite the president. It is the most difficult job for me to give a decisive opinion on these matters. I would much rather that you left me alone.

"Granting the implications that I have drawn from the last resolution you cannot possibly escape its logical conclusion. You will want to seize power. You will have to surrender certain things in order to get it. You will have to be like other parties. You will be driven into their ways. May be you will be an advanced party. This picture repels me. I don't believe in the expression 'seizure of power'. There is no such thing as 'seizure of power'. I have no power save what resides in the people. I am a mere representative of the power in the people. While Rajaji was developing his theme I felt that wide gulf separated me from him. He thinks he will best be able to serve his country by taking advantage of every opportunity to serve the country. He takes office in that light. I differ fundamentally from him. He may satisfy himself with the illusion that he is serving non-violence. I am not afraid of power. Some day or the other we will have to take it. The Viceroy is here to serve his country, his interests, and, therefore, he must use all resources that India has mercilessly. If we participate in the war, we shall have learnt some lesson in violence, even if the Britishers are defeated. This will give us some experience, some power such as a soldier has, but all this at the cost of independence. This seems to me the logical consequence of your resolution. This does not appeal to me. If we are non-violent, I know how to deal with the situation. The vast majority of our people had violence in them, but they were taught the power of non-violence. Now you must teach them the power of violence. There is a confusion in the people now. It is not my interpretation which has caused it but the resolution itself. I cannot guide you in this atmosphere. Whatever I say will embarrass you.

"I told the Viceroy that the British, if they succeed, will not be better than Mussolini or Hitler. If there is peace with Hitler, India will be exploited by all powers. But if we are non-violent and Japan comes, we will see that they do not get anything without our consent. Non-violence has worked wonders in twenty years. We cannot do any such thing with violence."

Maulana Azad: "The resolution in my mind did not permit the use of violence in dealing with internal disorders. What I had in mind was the question whether force has any place in the state. We were asked to decide about it one way or the other. We were not prepared to envisage India of the future without army."

Jawaharlal: "The question was brought forward by Gandhiji in the world context. He wanted to place the message of non-violence before the world."

Gandhi said: "Not exactly the world context. I thought of the immediate problem. I had not the world picture before me but India and India alone. In the position they have taken the Working Committee is free to render help and to prepare an army. It is free to take office. The Viceroy thought the resolution favoured him. He said, 'You want to defend India, you want aeroplanes, battleships, tanks, etc. We will give you all these. This will serve our purpose and also yours. This is the golden opportunity. You should come and get equipped.'

"I regret the Congress took what I considered as a backward step, but it is perfectly an honourable step. It has taken the only step it could. I will still try to wean it and the rank and file from this mistake. If the rank and file feel with me, the Working Committee will retract the step. A larger issue of internal anarchy was before us. What contribution shall we make if anarchy overtook us? Will the masses co-operate in the non-violent effort? I will test the masses, and if I find they will desert me, I will shape my policy accordingly, but I won't collapse before they collapse. The terrible things that are going on in Europe fill me with anguish. I do not know where I could come in there. I feel I can do something and hence the statement.

"Private armies never appeal to me. The masses will be exploited by us. We will go and tell them that you must give us your last penny to defend your hearths and homes. I cannot do this. This is not for me. I want to proclaim to the country that India will defend itself non-violently, so far as the Congress is concerned."

Rajagopalachari: "I cannot go with Gandhiji in his conception of the state. Ours is a political organization, not working for non-violence but for the political ideal. We are working in competition with other political parties."

Jawaharlal: "I agree with Rajaji in his understanding of violence and non-violence; else we cannot function on the political plane."

Gandhi said: "Very difficult questions have arisen in course of the discussion. Rajaji has summarily rejected the idea that we can retain power by non-violent means even when we attain it by non-violent means. This was illustrated while the Congress was in office. To the extent they used violence, the ministries failed. Thier action showed bankruptcy of our non-violence. Perhaps, we could not have done otherwise. I advised giving up office. Rajaji, however, does not accept what I have said that it is possible to hold office without the use of more than police violence.

"I again want to emphasize two things. I do believe that declaration of independence is necessary. The legal declaration may come afterwards. If the Government expect any help from us, our help will be moral. It will be infinitely superior than what they can get by manipulation, coaxing or coercion. I do feel, if they have courage to do the right thing, the scales will be turned in their favour. Independence in action must be declared. Very lightly it was said by some members that we must dismiss from our minds civil resistance. I have never dismissed it. A time may come when we shall resort to civil disobedience. I can not conceive the idea of our sitting silently when people are made to cooperate under compulsion. This process is going on now. The process was gentle and was not much felt till the French capitulation. I cannot conceive my remaining silent or sitting at ease with this coercion going on unhampered. But can our people show non-violence through and through? The non-violence of the weak will bring us some relief but not real joy and power—it will end our being exhausted. If we begin with non-violence of the weak and end also with that, we are finished. Therefore, now when the testing time has come, you say it is not possible. All honour to your integrity and courage of conviction. But I cannot help feeling that our non-violence has ended in disaster. I say again with experience and conviction that it is possible to touch power through non-violence, but we may not take it. A non-violent organization may not accept office but it can get things done its way. Thus alone can we have power if we have not non-violent control over people. Jawaharlal has done less than justice to those who believe in non-violence. He means that they want to be superior men leaving the dirty work of violence to be done by others. I hold, on the other hand, that we don't take power at all. It involves emoluments, glory, and things which people prize. Those in power consider that they are superior and others subordinate. When a non-violent man refuses to take power he says I decline because if I accept I shall make a mess of it. I am not built that way. Let credit

go to others. I never felt that I was superior to those who took power, nor did they feel that they were inferior or called upon to do a dirty job. Now suppose, you at this critical moment hold fast to non-violence in the midst of other parties who swear by violence, you will be in a minority. Why a small non-violent group immediately expects to win power before they convert others? Let others hold power. A group of non-violent men wishing to convert the country to non-violence will not bother about power. In holding fast to the creed, you will have converted a majority of the people. A man who has self-confidence will convert the country. But you say that millions will never arrive at that stage. I feel definitely they can. Do not lay down the proposition. I became non-violent after laborious processes. It is the essence of non-violence that we give the same credit to the whole of mankind that we claim for ourselves. I have never felt that I alone can practise non-violence. Quite the contrary. I consider myself a mediocre. I belong purely to rank and file, and yet I lead the masses. I can produce heroes from the illiterates of Gujarat. A time was when these illiterates said, 'What we can do?' Today these very people are wielding power. If we can convert a few thousands, we can convert millions. Both masses of Hindus and Muslims acted non-violently in 1920. Would it not be a great thing for us if we have acquired such an influence upon public opinion and upon those who wield power that we don't have to compel obedience? Non-violence cannot suddenly mount to power. I am not satisfied with swaraj for the few. It is for millions. They must feel it. By violent means they cannot feel it. This opportunity has come into our hands. We have got to decide. I do not leave out even lepers from my non-violent calculation. I am not talking through my hat. I have a leper in my ashram. He feels now that he can play his part, though he cannot wield arms. Logically, I have endeavoured to show that there is nothing to prevent you from taking power if certain conditions are fulfilled.

"Many Indian villages and institutions are behaving non-violently. We are trying to produce a homogeneous nation. We must allow time for it. What has violence accomplished in the world? I think impatience has seized us. If we do not take office, others will take office. If you think that you can serve the people by entering into competition with others, then you are mistaken. We are democrats. We would be presumed to be ruling by the will of the people. We must dismount if people rebel. We have not given that trial to non-violence which we might have. All of us did our best. Let us do better. If we do better, if we have got the proper courage, we shall have left something for India to be proud of. I would like you to feel with me that it is perfectly possible to hold the state without an army. If anybody comes, I will square accounts with

him along non-violent lines. Why we should fear that they will swallow us! Violent people fight violent people. They do not touch non-violent people. We build up huge armaments in order to ward off an attack in some distant future. The divisions in the country also provide us with reason for our keeping to non-violence. We can hold our people peacefully against the whole world.

"Our non-violence is of the weak. It is not non-violence of the brave. If we have affection for our neighbours, there will be no Hindu-Muslim riots. These riots can be prevented. And if they can be prevented, other anarchy can also be prevented."

Jawaharlal: "I appreciate what you say about non-violence; we have a number of difficulties to face. How shall we deal with lunatics who want to become Napoleons? They will upset all established order. There will be continuous instability."

Maulana Azad: "It is true, that non-violence has not received a fair trial. Still I think non-violence has worked miraculous changes in India. This weapon was given to a weak, helpless country. It wielded it with success but in an environment of weakness."

Rajagopalachari: "You have missed the point. The problem we are facing is how to run the state and not how to mount to power. What you have said comes to this: we remain Brahmins and let Kshatriyas rule."

Gandhi placed before the committee a draft embodying his views.

Jawaharlal Nehru broadly agreed with Gandhi's draft but he strongly opposed certain paras of the draft. He stated that undue and wrong emphasis had been placed on military-mindedness: "I am not against making Indian people military-minded. There is hunger in the country for military training. They have not known it for two hundred years. There is a natural craving to fill up this vacuum in their lives. By condemning military-mindedness we only accentuate it. This is not the right approach. I want my countrymen to learn to stand erect, walk in step, and even wield arms if only to put them away afterwards. One who has not handled a rifle is curious about it. We cannot satisfy his curiosity by merely condemning it."

"It sounds ridiculous for the Working Committee to associate itself with the appeal made by Gandhiji," Nehru stated. "I can understand Gandhiji issuing such an appeal. I have, however, no doubt that the appeal will fall flat on Englishmen. They simply will not be able to understand it. To their mind the appeal will be a source of strength to Hitler. I agree with the paras clarifying our position about independence and resumption of ministerial offices."

Rajagopalachari: "The draft is a series of emanations from one attitude to the whole problem. I miss reality in the draft. We are living in a

dreamland. Gandhiji's draft is based on a conception of non-violence which we do not accept. The question troubling us is Gandhiji's leadership. If we accept Gandhiji as our leader, we accept his creed and programme. By accepting the draft we will be shunting ourselves in barren and negative position. There is a conflict in my mind."

Bhulabhai Desai: "This draft wipes out the old resolution we passed at Wardha. There is no open mind on the question of defence. We have already decided about it. Eleven hundred officers are being trained today. Shall we tell them to leave the training? For long, we have been agitating for the Indianization of the army. Shall we abandon now this platform?"

Sardar Patel: "The Working Committee cannot associate itself with Gandhiji's appeal to the British. I agree that this resolution is reversal of the old resolution. But the reversal is necessary to end the confusion which the last resolution has created. Everywhere questions are asked why has Gandhiji's leadership been given up? In my opinion Gandhiji's draft minus the appeal must be adopted with some minor alterations, here and there."

Maulana Azad: "Gandhiji's logic is irresistible. We take up arms for defence but we use them finally for aggression. This is what happened with Islam. The Prophet took up arms for sheer self-defence, but his followers used them for aggression and conquest. We, however, realize that we cannot go full length with Gandhiji. Non-violence, however, must remain our sheet-anchor for freedom struggle and for coping with internal disorders. But our position about defence remains that of non-violence for all our immediate purposes. I think Gandhiji should resume leadership and not leave us in midstream. We have no right to go back on Wardha resolution."

Gandhi said: "I have placed this draft before you to know your reactions. I have no doubt you took in Wardha the wisest decision that you could take. The discussions today have more than confirmed my opinion. I am more than fully repaid for the labour I spent on the draft. I reduced my ideas to writing only to find your reactions. I have listened to every word of the discussion. I see that there is a definite wide gulf between us, such that it cannot be bridged. To attempt to do so would be doing a disservice to the country. I have no impatience, no irritation in me. If I find that my hold has weakened, I must withdraw in the interest of the Congress itself.

"I have always derived my politics from ethics or religion, and my struggle is also derived by my deriving my politics from ethics. It is because I swear by ethics and religion that I find myself in politics. A person who is a lover of his country is bound to take lively interest in

politics, otherwise he will not be able to carry on his avocation with peace. I came into the Congress with my religion. The time has arrived now when I should watch you and see whether I can take you as far as necessary.

"I had not in the past the slightest difficulty in carrying Rajaji with me—his intelligence as well as his heart, but since this office question cropped up, I saw that our thoughts were running in different directions. I see that I cannot carry him now along with me. It is vital for me, therefore, to ask for absolution. The internal dissensions are a small thing. I have not concentrated sufficiently on them. If you cannot come to a decision about external aggression, you cannot come to a decision about internal dissensions. My mind does not make a vital distinction between the two. I have deliberately put in the resolution the expression 'open mind'. You have said that we can mount to power by non-violent means, but you doubt the ability to retain and consolidate it except through an army. The little police force that I have in mind will not be sufficient to cope with big disorders unless we have, as a nation, sufficient non-violence in us, or, in other words, we apply non-violence to politics. The technique of non-violence is different from that of violence. We shut our eyes to the fact that our control on the masses, over even our registered Congressmen, is ineffective. The negative response is there. In positive response both fail. It is not our fault exactly. Millions are concerned. Even a military programme could not have been complete in twenty years. We must, therefore, be patient. If the masses have won independence by non-violence, then they can also retain it by non-violence.

"Twenty years is nothing for the country. Our non-violence was restricted to capturing power. We were successful as against the British, but we failed against our own people. At several places, we have had violent demonstrations by Congressmen and the Congress committees. Hence, our difficulties and my insistence that we must develop non-violence. This is the time, otherwise we will cut a sorry figure. Rajaji is right that if I believe that the Congress is with me, I am living in a fool's paradise. I have plunged with my eyes open. I played with fire when I entered into partnership with the Muslims. The Hindus said that the Muslims will organize themselves. They did. I have one measure for the whole of mankind.

"I have been thinking seriously about the weaknesses that have crept into the Congress but always in the hope that I will carry you further when the time comes. When Bhulabhai said we are committing ourselves, he is right and not right. A document is to be read with commas and with semicolons. Today we have the choice between weapons of

destruction or non-violence for internal and external purposes. We have got to make the choice. Let us say good-bye to non-violence if we must. Today non-violence, tomorrow violence, this is our attitude. We don't know what we shall do in future. Let alone tomorrow, let us ask ourselves shall we shoulder the rifle now? Bhulabhai spoke of 1,100 officers. This does not move a single muscle of mine. My horizon extends to the submerged millions. The 1,100 are lost in that ocean. I shall never be able to forgive myself if I take a false step. If you do not come to Rajaji's position today, you will come to it tomorrow. If you have imbibed non-violence in practice, well and good; for myself I go with it in my pocket, in my heart and mind. I shall try to convert my people and see what is in store for me. In the alternative we must give our people the military training, but that for ourselves and not for the empire. The empire is tottering. The sun on it is fast setting. If we lack faith in non-violence, let us organize for violence. I hold we will fail. I agree with Maulana Saheb that those who start with violence for self-defence, end with aggression. He has quoted his own co-religionist. I have got this precious thing for which I want to live. I don't want to be instrumental in militarizing the masses. A non-violent soldier will not be despised. He may be a consumptive, but he will give a better account of himself than the tallest Pathan. I want you to seriously examine Rajaji's position and see if you can adopt it. Otherwise, he should be allowed to go away. Our reading on non-violence differs at this moment. Let him carve out a position for himself. Rajaji must agitate even if he is in a hopeless minority. I started alone, but soon I enjoyed a vast majority. He should strain every nerve to persuade the Working Committee or reconstitute the committee of those who are not saturated with non-violence up to a point I have stated.

"You should allow me to carry the message as I know it. The country will not lose by this two-fold division if we are honest. We must all act according to our views. It fills me with intense pleasure that everyone has spoken frankly. Visualizing the position as it changes from moment to moment, we have to find out what part we can each of us play in the drama. Let Jawaharlal take the lead. He will express himself forcibly. I shall be in his pocket."

After the discussion Gandhi withdrew his draft and Rajagopalachari placed his draft before the Working Committee.

Gandhi said: "If Rajaji's draft reflects the Congress mind it must be accepted. If it does not and if it is the personal opinion of some members, it is necessary to know where the Congress mind lies. In order to know this, at the present, no resolution be passed. You must boldly face the situation. You must recognize that non-violence that we have hitherto

offered, is different from true non-violence. The non-violence of the Congress represents only the resistance of the weak. It is passive resistance, the expression which was flung in my face in South Africa and which I resisted. It does not satisfy me, but the country will be free from the incubus of doubt. Whenever we tried non-violence of the strong, we have miserably failed.

"The business of the members of the Working Committee should be to ascertain where the Congress mind lies. They should go to provinces and quietly ascertain the opinion there. This will give us the opinion of the general run of Congressmen. We will then come with better and more accurate information. Each one may try to influence the members in his favour upto a point. If we find that Rajaji's position reflects the popular will, we should allow it to be worked. I am not satisfied with it. But then I judge everything from the standpoint of non-violence.

"I feel that the draft will be accepted by the Government. If it can be, then I hold independence too would be swallowed. The question of independence should not be taken in a lukewarm manner. This will be tactically wrong. If we really mean what we say in the draft, we should be prepared to put forth the best war effort of which we are capable. I think we can get both our independence and National Government—not one in which all the parties will be represented but it will be a transference of power to the Congress—if the Government are assured that the Congress will participate fully in the war effort. But this will mean we have said good-bye to non-violence. The Government is anxious to get the Congress. They are resourceful to get other tools if they cannot get the Congress. At present they are doubtful if they can get full assistance from the Congress even if they transfer power to the Congress. I have never allowed them to think that they will get even one soldier from the Congress. All they can get from it is moral support. They realize it. They weigh the two things: what they get in a voluntary manner from other parties and the moral support of the Congress. But, if we go and say that the sources of India are at the disposal of the British, they will accept the Congress demand. The question is whether it is an outlook which you can countenance. I have a thousand objections but they are based on non-violence."

To the question—"how does the moral support of the Congress help the British?"—he replied:

"Britain rises in the estimation of the whole world. It means that it seeks eagerly the support of an organization which has functioned non-violently for twenty years. They will say that we will rather have your support than the support of other parties. They will make an appeal to non-violent India. I am taking a lofty view of the moral support. They

have to make their choice between India which represents force and this incalculable force of non-violence. These are two dissimilar forces. If the British say that they will rather have this moral support, it will be a tremendous thing. It is not a mechanical process at all. It is a vital process.

"If you want to do justice to the Congressmen, you must quietly go and ascertain their opinion. If we find that they have no true non-violence, we must make an honest declaration. We will have done our duty. Then we must arm ourselves. If we do so in an open and sincere manner, we will overcome other organizations. I know the working of the violence. I have always put it side by side with non-violence. I do not feel for one moment that I represent only myself in holding extreme view that I do. I feel, I represent the dumb mind of India. If I had physical strength and went to the people, I am sure they will say 'yes' to my proposition. I know how to put it to the masses in their language."

Sardar Patel: "As far as the mind of the Congressmen is concerned, it would be unnecessary to postpone the decision. When we passed the first resolution in September, all Congressmen have been thinking and working on those lines: 'If such and such a declaration is made we will give our co-operation.' This is a key-note of our attitude. Gandhiji has called it moral support. We have interpreted it differently. If a declaration is made, we give full support, moral and otherwise."

Jawaharlal: "Full support does not follow from the September declaration. It will be for free India to decide it. A fair number of people think of getting military training in the present circumstances, but vast number of people will resent if we give up declaration. It is folly to give them help when the British power is tottering."

Gandhi said: "Such help rendered will go in favour of India. It will mean that we tried our best to save the sinking ship. They say: 'Give us helping hand when we are drowning.' We can reply: 'We are trained in the school of adversity. We fought nobly and non-violently. We give you this help now that you are sinking.' There is nothing wrong in such an attitude."

In the light of the discussion Rajaji recast his draft. As there was no unanimity on the resolution it was thought it would be best to decide the issue by means of votes. The majority consisting of Sardar Patel, Rajagopalachari, Bhulabhai Desai, Jamnalal Bajaj, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Asaf Ali voted in favour of the amended resolution. Jawaharlal Nehru voted against the resolution. Abdul Ghaffar voted against the resolution on grounds of non-violence. Rajendra Prasad, Shankarrao Deo, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh and Kripalani remained neutral on grounds of non-violence. Sarojini Naidu remained neutral. From among the invitees

Pattabhi Sitaramayya voted for the resolution and Narendra Deva and Achyut Patwardhan voted against it.

Abdul Ghaffar announced his intention to resign from the Working Committee. Gandhi supported him in this. He said Khan Saheb held a peculiar position in his province. Thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars followed his personal lead without question. If they suspected that he had turned over to violence, they would do likewise or revive their old family feuds. He, therefore, must make his position crystal clear before them. He should be allowed to resign.

Another resolution passed by the Working Committee was on Waziristan. Gandhi's keen interest in the Frontier Province, the promising field for the non-violence of the strong, prompted him to write an article about the Waziris, on the train to Wardha:

"Waziristan is one of the regions on the border of the N.-W. Frontier Province. Everybody knows that there are a number of tribes living in the North-Western Frontier Province. The popular notion about them is that they are born only to rob and plunder and harrass the British Government. Both these notions are far removed from reality. These trans-border tribes are born and bred in extreme poverty. Life among their native hills is a tale of chronic hardship and internecine strife. India comes handy to them for satisfying their pecuniary need by raiding. Besides, there are not lacking people who, in order to serve their own political ends, are ready to misguide the tribes and set them on the wrong path. Our knowledge about these tribes, therefore, is almost confined to their raiding activities. Khan Saheb has told me that these tribesmen are very simple and innocent by nature. Whenever I have visited the Frontier Province I had tried to get across and make acquaintance with these tribes. My first effort in this direction was made at the time of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. I had to give it up as Lord Irwin said that his Government would feel embarrassed. I next sought permission through correspondence, but was equally unsuccessful. I renewed the attempt at the time of my first Frontier tour and interviewed H.E. the Governor in that behalf, but he could not give or could not obtain the necessary permission. Recently the N.-W. Frontier Provincial Congress Committee tried to send a deputation among the Waziris not with any political motive but simply to do welfare work. But the permission could not be obtained. The Working Committee has now decided to send a deputation consisting of Shri Bhulabhai Desai and Janab Asaf Ali. Let us hope the deputation will be given the necessary permission.

"The object of the Working Committee's resolution is not political. Its purpose simply is to find out how help can be rendered to the border tribes and friendly relations cultivated with them. It ill comports with

our dignity to be in constant dread of them. Ignorance is at the root of most of our fears. If I suspected my neighbour, naturally I would be afraid of him. But if I cast out my suspicion, the fear would automatically go. For years we have proceeded on the assumption that the authorities would under no circumstances allow us to cultivate friendly relations with the border tribes. The Government, on their side, have, under the spell of their pet bogy, spent crores of rupees on building of forts and blockhouses and on sending out military expeditions into the tribal territory. It should be a duty of the Congress to cultivate sincere and friendly relations with these folk. The proposed step of the Working Committee is, therefore, to be welcomed. Let us hope that the Congress, having begun the efforts, will pursue it to the end."

Under "Khan Saheb's Ahimsa", Gandhi wrote:

"In the storm that shook most of the members of the Working Committee Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan stood firm as a rock. He had never any doubt about his position, and his statement which I reproduce below should serve as a beacon light to all of us:

" 'Some recent resolutions of the Working Committee indicate that they are restricting the use of non-violence to the fight for India's freedom against constituted authority. How far and in what manner this will have to be applied in the future I cannot say. The near future will perhaps throw more light on this. Meanwhile, it is difficult for me to continue in the Congress Working Committee and I am resigning from it. I should like to make it clear that the non-violence I have believed in and preached to my brethren of the Khudai Khidmatgars is much wider. It affects all our life, and only that has permanent value. Unless we learn this lesson of non-violence fully, we shall never do away with the deadly feuds which have been the curse of the people of the Frontier. Since we took to non-violence and the Khudai Khidmatgars pledged themselves to it, we have largely succeeded in ending these feuds. Non-violence has added greatly to the courage of the Pathans. Because the Pathans were previously addicted to violence far more than others, they have profited by non-violence much more. We shall never really and effectively defend ourselves except through non-violence. The Khudai Khidmatgars must, therefore, be what our name implies—servants of God and humanity—by laying down our own lives and never taking any life.'

"It is worthy of the Khan Saheb and all he has stood for during the past twenty years. He is a Pathan and a Pathan may be said to be born with a rifle or a sword in his hand. But Khan Saheb deliberately asked his Khudai Khidmatgars to shed all weapons when he asked them to join the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act. He saw that his deliberate

giving up of the weapons of violence had a magical effect. It was the only remedy for the blood feuds which were handed down from sire to son and which had become part of the normal life of a Pathan. They had decimated numerous families, and non-violence seemed to Khan Saheb to have come as longed-for salvation. The violent blood feuds would otherwise have no end and would spell the end of the Pathans. He saw as clear as daylight that if he could persuade his people not to retaliate, the suicidal feuds would cease and the Pathans would be able to give a better account of their bravery. They took up his message and put into practice what with them became non-violence of the brave.

"Being so clear about his own faith and that of the Khudai Khidmatgars, there was for him no escape from resignation of his membership of the Congress Working Committee. His continuing on it would have been anomalous and might have meant an end of his life's work. He could not ask his people to join as recruits in the army and at the same time forget the law of the tribal retaliation. The simple Pathan would have argued with him—and the argument would have been irresistible—that the present war was a war of retaliation and revenge, and there was no difference between it and their blood feuds.

"I do not know how far Khan Saheb has succeeded in carrying his message to his people. This I know that with him non-violence is a matter of not intellectual conviction but of intuitive faith. Nothing can, therefore, shake it. About his followers he cannot say how far they will adhere to it. But that does not worry him. He has to do his duty which he owes to them. The result he leaves to God. He derives his ahimsa from the Holy Koran. He is a devout Musalman. During his stay with me for over a year, I never saw him miss his *namaz* or his Ramzan fast except when he was ill. But his devotion to Islam does not mean disrespect for other faiths. He has read the Gita. His reading is slight but selective, and he immediately assimilates what appeals to him. He loathes long argument and does not take long to make up his mind. If he succeeds in his mission, it would mean the solution of many another problem. But the result no one can predict. 'The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.' "

Individual Satyagraha

1940–1

MATTERS came to a head during the meeting of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee at Poona in the last week of July, 1940. It ratified the resolution passed by the Working Committee at Delhi. Gandhi was not even present in Poona this time to tender his advice.

The British Government had been considering a new move. The Viceroy's statement dated August 18, 1940, commonly referred to as the August offer, declared that the new constitution should be "primarily the responsibility of the Indians themselves". There were two provisos: British obligations must be fulfilled and the minority opinions must not be overridden. The constitutional issues, the statement stressed, could not be decided at a moment "when the Commonwealth is engaged in a struggle for existence," but after the war a representative Indian constitution-making body would be set up and the Indian proposals as to its form and operation would at any time be welcome. Meanwhile the decision to enlarge the Central Executive Council and establish an Advisory War Council would be brought into effect.

The Viceroy invited the Congress President, Maulana Azad, to discuss with him the participation of the Congress in the Government. As there was no common ground between the Congress demand for independence and the Viceroy's offer, President Azad declined the offer. In a letter to Azad, Gandhi said that it was not the will of God that India should participate in this war. "In his view, this was the reason why I had refused to meet the Viceroy. If on the other hand, had I met the Viceroy, Gandhiji feared that there might have been a settlement and India drawn into the war," observes Maulana Azad.

The Congress felt very badly let down. It had openly disagreed with Gandhi and had set forth the conditions which would enable it to throw its full weight into the war effort. The Working Committee meeting at Wardha, on August 18, placed on record: "Rejection of the Congress proposals is a proof of the British Government's determination to continue to hold India by the sword."

When the A.-I.C.C. met at Bombay on September 15, it was quite clear that the Congress leaders, after their brief defection, had resumed their allegiance to Gandhi. "The offer Great Britain has made through the Viceroy is not worth looking at," said Azad in the opening speech.

"These events made us decide to again request Gandhiji to resume active leadership of the Congress and he has agreed to do this."

The following resolution drafted by Gandhi was then formally moved by Nehru and seconded by Patel:

"The All-India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of the public opinion and which would lead to the degradation of her people and to their continued enslavement. By following this policy, the British Government have created an intolerable situation and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for national freedom the A.-I.C.C., therefore, requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. The Delhi resolution confirmed by the A-.I.C.C. at Poona, which prevented him from so doing, no longer applies. It has lapsed.

"The A.-I.C.C. sympathize with the British people as well as the peoples of the other countries involved in the war. The Congressmen cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill will against them, and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But, this self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Congress must insist on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence. The Congress, however, has no desire at the present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of liberties of the people.

"In view of certain misapprehensions that have arisen with regard to the policy of non-violence, the A-.I.C.C. desires to state this afresh and to make it perfectly clear that this policy continues, notwithstanding anything contained in previous resolutions which may have lead to these misapprehensions. This committee firmly believes in the policy and practice of non-violence, not only in the struggle for swaraj but also, in so far as this may be possible of application, in free India..."

Addressing the delegates, Gandhi said:

"The language of this resolution is in the main mine. The Working Committee has accepted this phraseology deliberately, well knowing its implications. The result is this: If we get a declaration from the British Government that the Congress can carry on anti-war propaganda and preach non-co-operation with the Government in their war effort, we will not have civil disobedience.

"Let there be no mistake as to what I am about. I want my individuality to remain unimpaired. If I lose it, I would be of no service to India, much less to the British people, still less to humanity. My individual liberty is the same as the nation's, convertible with the national liberty. I do not claim any greater liberty for myself. Hence my liberty is equal to the liberty of you all and no greater. I feel that if my liberty is at stake, yours also is at stake. I claim the liberty of going through the streets of Bombay and say that I shall have nothing to do with this war because I do not believe in this war and in this fratricide that is now going on in Europe. I admire the bravery. But what is the use of this bravery? I deplore the foolishness and the gross ignorance. These people do not know what they are fighting for. This is how I look at this war that is going on across the seas. I cannot possibly take part in it. Nor I want the Congress to do so.

"The part that I would like to take is the part of peacemaker. If the British people in their wisdom had recognized the independence, not of the Congress but of all India, and if the other parties of India had also co-operated with us, we would have taken the honourable place of peacemakers between these nations. Such is my ambition. But today, I know that is the day-dream. But sometimes a man lives in his day-dreams. I live in mine and picture the world as full of good human beings. In the socialist's language, there will be a new structure of society, a new order of things. I am also aspiring often for a new order of things that will astonish the world.

"In order completely to clarify our position, I propose to approach the Viceroy. I will tell him that this is the position to which we have been reduced: we do not want to embarrass you and deflect you from your purpose in regard to the war effort. We go our own way and you go yours, undeterred, the common ground being non-violence. If we carry the people with us, then there will be no war effort on the part of our people. If, on the other hand, without your using any but moral pressure, you find that the people help the war effort, we can have no cause for grùmbling. But let our voice also be heard. Let the people use any reasoning they like for refusal to help the war effort, provided that they all accept non-violence, provided also that what they say is said openly and not secretly. Everyone should have perfect liberty to preach by pen and tongue: 'We cannot aid imperialism, we cannot aid spoliation.' Freedom of speech and pen is the foundation of swaraj. If the foundation is in danger, you have to exert the whole of your might in order to defend that single stone. May God help you!"

The following day he again addressed the delegates. Referring to the Hindu-Muslim question, Gandhi said: "If a conflict is there in store

for us, who can prevent it? We have to be prepared even for anarchy and chaos, but we must have the faith that non-violence cannot result in chaos. But, if somehow disorders take place, they will be a test of our non-violence. Non-violence is a force that gains in intensity with the increase in the violence that it has to deal with. And I hope that you will get that power of non-violence before I die. But there is a message I should like to reach the ears of every Musalman. India cannot win independence if eight or more crores of Musalmans are opposed to it. But I cannot believe that all of them are so opposed to it, until it is proved to me by the votes of every adult Musalman. Let them declare that they want to have their political salvation apart from that of the Hindus. India is a poor country full of Hindus and Musalmans and others staying in every corner of it. To divide it into two is worse than anarchy. It is vivisection which cannot be tolerated, not because I am a Hindu, for I am speaking from this platform as a representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all else. But I will say to them: 'Vivisect me before you vivisect India. You shall not do, what even the Moguls, who ruled over India for over two centuries, did not do.' What I have said about the Musalmans, applies equally to the Sikhs. If thirty lakhs of Sikhs will obstruct Indian independence, we shall deal with them non-violently. Non-violent swaraj cannot be won except by non-violence. There are other obstacles too imposed by the existence of an alien power. But we must strain every nerve to achieve communal peace. Islam means peace. That peace cannot be confined to the Musalmans. It must mean peace for the whole world."

The All-India Congress Committee adopted the momentous resolution by 192 votes to 7, in pursuance of which Gandhi again assumed the leadership. Abdul Ghaffar withdrew his resignation from the Working Committee to participate in the Congress activities as before. He had talks with Gandhi in Bombay. On reaching Peshawar he received the following letter from Gandhi:

"I hope that all the conversation we had in Bombay has soaked into you. If it has, every problem could be solved by reference to those fundamentals which I tried to put before you. Our non-violence has to begin at home with our children, elders, and neighbours. We have to overlook the so-called blemishes of our friends and neighbours, and never forgive our own. Then only shall we be able to right ourselves, and as we ascend higher, our non-violence has to be practised among our political associates. We have to see and approach the viewpoints of those who differ from us. We have to be patient with them and convince them of their errors and be convinced of our own. Then proceeding further we have to deal patiently and gently with the political parties

that have different policies and different principles. We have to look at their criticism from their own standpoint, always remembering that the greater the distance between ourselves and others, the greater the scope for the play of non-violence. And it is only when we have passed our examination or test in these fields that we can deal with those against whom we are fighting and who have grievously wronged us.

"This was the thing we talked about. The other thing I said was that a non-violent man has to keep himself engaged usefully during all the waking hours, and, therefore, constructive work is for him what arms are for the violent man."

Gandhi interviewed the Viceroy at Simla at the end of September. Lord Linlithgow informed Gandhi of the manner in which the pacifists were treated in Great Britain and he added: "It would clearly not be possible in the interests of India herself, more particularly at this most critical juncture in the war, to acquiesce in the interference with the war effort which would be involved in freedom of speech so wide as that for which you had asked."

"If the Congress has to die," answered Gandhi, "it would do so in the act of proclaiming its faith. It is unfortunate that we have not been able to arrive at an agreement on the single issue of freedom of speech."

On October 11 the Working Committee met at Wardha and they discussed for three days the situation when Gandhi unfolded his plan of civil disobedience. In a statement issued from Sevagram he said:

"The plan is simply this. Direct action will be commenced by Shri Vinoba Bhave and for the time being confined to him only. And since it is to be confined to individual civil disobedience and that too of him only, it will be so conducted by him as to exclude others, directly or indirectly. But since it is concerned with freedom of speech, the public will be involved to an extent. It is open to them, either to listen to him or not.

"But much will depend upon what the Government wish to do. In spite of all attempt to confine civil disobedience to individuals and for the moment to one only, they can precipitate a crisis by making it a crime to listen to Vinoba or read anything written by him . . . I have discussed with Vinoba Bhave various plans, so as to avoid unnecessary frictions or risk. The idea is to make all action as strictly non-violent as is humanly possible. One man's violence, veiled or open, cannot go beyond a certain limit, but within that limit it would be effective. One man's non-violent action would be despised and ridiculed by the non-believer in it. In truth, while the effect of a given violent action can be reduced to mathematical terms, that of the non-violent action defies all calculation and has been known to falsify many that have been

hazarded. How far I shall be able to present an example of unadulterated non-violence remains to be seen . . ."

On October 17, 1940 Vinoba Bhave solemnly inaugurated the individual satyagraha by delivering an anti-war speech at Paunar, a village near Wardha. Vinoba moved from village to village on foot and made speeches on the three following days. On October 21, he was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

The Government had given strict instructions to the press not to give any publicity to Vinoba's activities. On October 18 the editor of *Harijan* received a notice advising him that "no account of incidents leading up to satyagraha or any subsequent development" be published without previous reference to the Chief Press Adviser.

The *Harijan* dated November 10 was printed in bold type, bidding "good-bye" to the readers: "I shall miss my weekly talks with you, as I expect you too will miss them. The value of those talks consisted in their being a faithful record of my deepest thoughts. Such expression is not possible in a cramped atmosphere. As I have no desire to offer civil disobedience, I cannot write freely. As the author of satyagraha, I cannot, consistently with my professions, suppress the vital part of myself for the sake of being able to write on permissible subjects such as the constructive programme. It would be like dealing with the trunk without the head. The whole of the constructive programme is to me an expression of non-violence. I would be denying myself if I could not preach non-violence. For, that would be the meaning of submission to the ordinance. The suspension must, therefore, continue while gagging lasts. It constitutes a satyagrahi's respectful protest against the gag."

Abdul Ghaffar's *Pakhtun* too was concurrently suspended, after having given publicity to Vinoba Bhave's satyagraha.

After Vinoba Bhave, Jawaharlal Nehru offered himself as the second volunteer. He was to offer satyagraha on November 7, after giving due notice to the authorities. But he was arrested on October 31 at a railway station, when he was returning from Wardha after visiting Gandhi. In a note to Sardar Patel, Gandhi wrote: "For the present, only those I have chosen should go to prison. If the Government do not arrest me, I shall send all the rest, as many of them as the Government wants. If I am arrested, God will direct the movement."

In mid-November the campaign began with what Gandhi called the representative satyagraha. Satyagrahis were selected from groups such as the Congress Working Committee, All-India Congress Committee, and the Congress members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures. Many Congressmen, including most of the former ministers, appeared on the streets, uttered slogans and were arrested and sent to prison for

a year or more. Sardar Patel who had given notice of his intention to offer satyagraha, was arrested on November 17 and was detained under the Defence of India Rules. On the New Year's eve, President Azad was arrested and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. One by one all the top leaders were arrested.

Hundreds of satyagrahis joined the chorus: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance." By the end of January 1941 the number of convictions had risen to about 2,250. In several of these cases fines were imposed instead of imprisonment. Both the extent of the movement and the manner in which it was dealt with varied from province to province. It was strongest in the United Provinces and about half the total arrests were made there. The North-West Frontier Province was the least affected, although Abdul Ghaffar was quite active. Dr. Khan Sahib was picked up by the police and was driven home. In Bengal the satyagrahis were mostly left at liberty. On January 27, 1941 the sensational news of Subhas Bose's disappearance from his residence, where he was under constant watch of the police, was broadcast.

In April 1941, the rank-and-file members of the Congress were enrolled. The result was a sharp rise in the number of the satyagrahis. By mid-summer over 20,000 had been convicted, as many as 14,000 being in jail at one time.

The political dead-lock was strongly resented by all the parties in India. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru tried his best to bring about a settlement between the Congress and the League but Jinnah was adamant. Jinnah characterized the satyagraha campaign as an attempt to bring pressure on the British Government to concede the Congress demand. "My own impression is that Jinnah does not want any settlement till he has so consolidated the position of the Muslim League that he can dictate his terms to all the parties concerned, including the rulers," Gandhi complained to Sapru.

In mid-June the international situation unexpectedly changed when Germany invaded Soviet Russia. In July the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the formation of a National Defence Council were announced.

By December 1941 it had become obvious that something must be done quickly to improve the Indian political situation. Germany was advancing steadily into Soviet Russia and Japan had consolidated her position in Indo-China and was preparing for a final plunge in the war. Mobilization of India's vast resources and man-power had become an urgent military necessity. On December 3 the British Government made a conciliatory gesture: "The Government of India, confident in the

determination of responsible opinion in India to support the war effort until victory is secured, have reached the conclusion that the civil disobedience prisoners whose offences have been formal or symbolic in character can be set free, including Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad."

"So far as I am concerned," said Gandhi, "it cannot evoke a single responsive or appreciative chord in me. All the freedom that India enjoys is the freedom of the slave and not the freedom of the equal which is otherwise known as Complete Independence. If the Government of India are confident in their determination of all responsible opinion in India to support the war effort, the logical conclusion would be to keep civil disobedience prisoners in their custody because they produce a jarring note. The only meaning I can attach to the release, therefore, is that they expect that the prisoners will have a change of their opinions in their self-invited solitude. I am hoping that the Government will soon be disillusioned."

Gandhi issued the following statement, commending Abdul Ghaffar's constructive work:

"In the midst of inhuman conflagration which envelopes the world powers who believe in the strength of their arms, little knowing what in reality they are fighting for, it is healthy and uplifting to contemplate what a man like Badshah Khan, the first among the Khudai Khidmatgars, is doing for the cause of peace and for qualifying himself for taking effective part by non-violent means in the freedom movement.

"He has undying faith in non-violence, though he has not worked out all its implications. For the last few months, he has been holding little camps for the non-violent training of Khudai Khidmatgars. But during the third week of November he held a biggish one to which he had invited the neighbouring workers from the Punjab, Kashmir and Baluchistan. Charkha was the important activity and over 300 wheels plied daily. *Dhanush takli* was also introduced in the camp. Its cheapness and the ease with which it could be manufactured in every village appealed to all. Sanitation work was done in the surrounding villages, and there were speeches explaining non-violence and the necessity of non-participation in war.

"A resolution was passed appealing to the tribesmen to be peaceful and non-violent. Copies of it were printed for distribution among those tribesmen who come into British territory.

"Village cleaning was done in a perfectly orderly manner. Workers were divided into several parties carrying their own brooms. The villagers supplemented these from their own stock and joined the Khudai Khidmatgars in this loving service. They did not leave out even police stations. Men in charge of these gratefully accepted the service.

"The camp worked like this for seven days from the 16th upto the 22nd November. There were about twenty Hindus and two women in the party. Badshah Khan had written me that if I thought it necessary, I could send some one to the camp, meaning instructors. Therefore, I sent two who were best able to give full satisfaction. Badshah Khan, though ill, took part in every activity. The camp was of the simplest character. There were no servants. One medical man had volunteered his services which were most useful, as many men were suffering from malaria. The Government had also sent a doctor with some medicines.

"The following was the daily menu: 7.45 a.m.—tea and *nan*; twelve noon—bread made from wheat and maize with some *dal* or vegetables; 7 p.m.—ditto.

"The camp consisted of about 500 representatives and guests from all over the Frontier Province. They were accommodated in little tents without the side flaps. The total cost of running the camp was nearly Rs. 1,500.

"The Congressmen and others could profitably copy the simplicity, economy and orderliness of this camp."

During the fourteen months, over 25,000 satyagrahis were jailed. On December 4, 1941 the general release commenced throughout India. "Let it be known," said Gandhi, "that I have no authority to suspend civil disobedience on the extraneous grounds. That is for the Congress to do. For me personally there is no choice. As a man sworn to peace at this critical moment, to suspend my anti-war activity would be to deny myself. And, therefore, for those who think like me, whether we are misunderstood or worse befalls, we must express our faith through our action, hoping thereby that, ultimately, our way will be accepted by all warring powers as the only escape from a blood-bath, which is reducing man to his lowest depth."

Quit India

1941–5

On December 23, 1941 the Working Committee met at Bardoli, where Gandhi was resting, to review the situation as it developed since the last meeting held over a year ago. Japan having plunged in the war, the committee had to take a realistic view of the menacing situation. After a week's deliberation the members came to the following conclusion:

"The whole background in India is one of hostility and distrust of the British Government and not even the most far-reaching promises can alter this background, nor can a subject India offer voluntary or willing help to an arrogant imperialism which is indistinguishable from the fascist authoritarianism. The committee is, therefore, of opinion that the resolution of the A.-I.C.C. passed in Bombay on September 16, 1940 holds today and defines the Congress policy still."

The Working Committee stressed the importance of the constructive programme and expressed respectful appreciation of Gandhi's leadership and of the response of the nation to it; but Gandhi was no longer a leader. He stood for complete non-participation in war under all circumstances. In a letter to President Azad, he wrote:

"In the course of discussion I discovered that I had committed a grave error in the interpretation of the Bombay resolution. I had interpreted it to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all war on the grounds principally of non-violence. I found to my astonishment that most members differed from my interpretation and held that the opposition need not be on the ground of non-violence. On re-reading the Bombay resolution I found that the differing members were right and that I had read into it a meaning which its letter could not bear. The discovery of the error makes it impossible for me to lead the Congress in the struggle for resistance to war effort on grounds in which non-violence was not indispensible. I could not, for instance, identify myself with opposition to war effort on ground of ill will against Great Britain. The resolution contemplated material association with Britain in the war effort as a price for guaranteed independence of India. If such was my view and I believed in the use of violence for gaining independence and yet refused participation in the effort as the price of that independence, I would consider myself guilty of unpatriotic conduct. It is my certain belief that only non-violence can save India and the world from self-extinction. Such being the case, I must continue my

mission whether I am alone or assisted by an organization or individuals. You will, therefore, please relieve me of the responsibility laid upon me by the Bombay resolution. I must continue civil disobedience for free speech against all war with such Congressmen and others whom I select and who believe in the non-violence I have contemplated and are willing to conform to prescribed condition. . . "

Commenting on the Bardoli resolution, Abdul Ghaffar said: "I must own that I am no politician, I do not understand legalities, I know nothing of diplomacy. I am in the Working Committee because friends want me in it. I want the freedom of India, and with me non-violence is not a policy but a permanent creed. To my mind it is a positive and dynamic force and it is the only path which will save the Pathan from servility and self-destruction. Active non-violence is the key to India's salvation and, therefore, for me no participation not only in this war but in any war."

Addressing a public meeting in Bombay, Abdul Ghaffar referred to the Bardoli resolution and explained the basic principle of active non-violence. They could have some idea of it when they understood that as the forces of violence needed equipment, discipline and training, the forces of non-violence too needed these. The way of non-violence was the way of humanity and human freedom. He wanted people to realize this basic factor and give more thought to the issue of non-violence in a violent world. With violence in thought, they could not conceive of non-violence in action. It was futile to think that a society based on non-violence could be established by violent means, for violence only begot violence.

In an interview to the *Bombay Chronicle*, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"The rural tracts inhabited by sturdy Pathans of the North-West Frontier have been fast undergoing a change with the spread of the message of the charkha and non-violence through the Congress organization. The Khudai Khidmatgars in their thousands and especially trained workers of the jirga committees, which is another name for the Congress committees, have been conveying the message to the remotest villages of the Frontier Province. The charkha has been specially welcomed by the peasant in such of the rural tracts where cultivation is at a standstill for over nine months in the year for want of canals. Even in the areas where the peasant is busy with agricultural operations for the most part of the year because of the advantage of canal water, the charkha has been welcomed as a source of additional income.

"The Khudai Khidmatgars and other workers have not only been teaching the villagers the use of the charkha but also educating them in the matter of sanitation and enlightening them on the world events.

"This great movement of popularizing the constructive programme of the Congress was launched in the Frontier Province several years ago, but it was given considerable impetus three years back when a scheme for training specially selected Congressmen for village uplift work was undertaken. Hundreds of workers drawn from the Congress organization have gone into the villages after undergoing training in the camps which have been spread over the province.

"The aim of the camps is to give the workers a clear and practical idea of the work they are expected to do in the midst of the villagers. Hundreds of centres for training are spread over in the villages.

"The camps fall into three categories—taluka camps, district camps and provincial camps. About 70 workers were admitted into each of the taluka camps, 200 into each of the district camps and 500 into each of the provincial camps. Training for each batch lasted for one week, after which, workers dispersed into villages and rendered honorary service."

Questioned if there was a fund to finance this vast organization, he replied that there was nothing that could be called a fund. It was the poor Khudai Khidmatgars and the other workers in camps who shared the expenses of each camp. The richer classes in the province, whether Hindus or Muslims, and even the intelligentsia took no interest in the work intended for the betterment of the country.

Volunteers for training were carefully selected. It was essential that they should spin regularly, have enough education to be able to understand the principles of the movement in which they intended participating. It was equally essential that they should be strict believers in non-violence. Preparedness to undertake the cleaning of villages, to teach the villagers methods of sanitation, to go from house to house for teaching spinning, to practise non-violence in daily life and to make the villager understand the principles of ahimsa, were the requisites of a volunteer.

Life in the camps started at an early hour with prayers after ablutions. Then followed the roll-call. Volunteers who absented themselves during the roll-call had to pay the penalty by doing extra spinning or grinding corn. The commander of the camp would sometimes ask the absentee to undergo the punishment of walking up and down with his bedding slung on the shoulder.

The day's work in the camps commenced with physical exercise for twenty minutes. After tea, the volunteers would be divided into groups of five or six and sent into neighbouring villages. Each batch was led by a group leader who carried a charkha. On reaching the village, the volunteers would start cleaning the streets while the group leader would demonstrate spinning to the villagers. Women of the village would be taught the methods of sanitation.

After spending two hours in the villages, the volunteers returned to camps to attend lectures on the principles of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. Then came the period of three hours for meals, rest, and prayer. Spinning was done by every volunteer for two hours after recess. Villagers would be invited to visit the camps in the evening. They would be addressed by volunteers by way of educative propaganda.

The last item on the day's programme was flag salutation, attended by the Khudai Khidmatgars in their uniforms. In the night, lectures on true religion were arranged for the inmates of the camps. There was roll-call again before the volunteers retired at 10 p.m.

Referring to the food in the camps Abdul Ghaffar said that it was the simplest. *Nan* with vegetable or *dal* and butter-milk was provided, besides tea once in the morning. There was no luxury of camp-cots for the workers. They all slept on the ground.

The selection of volunteers for training was entrusted to the commander of Khudai Khidmatgars, and in the case of other Congressmen, to the jirga committees.

Questioned if the projects undertaken by the Congress ministry in the North-West Frontier Province had been making any progress, Abdul Ghaffar observed that many educational schemes undertaken by the Congress ministry had been given up by the present administration. He cited as an apt example the educational scheme formulated by the Congress ministry. The Frontier Province, he said, was very backward educationally. Before the Congress took office, there were no primary schools for girls even in bigger towns with a population of ten thousand. The Congress ministry introduced a scheme whereby at least two primary schools for girls and nine primary schools for the boys were to be opened in the districts every year. The scheme had resulted in considerable fillip being given to primary education. But the new administration had dropped the scheme, with the result that no new primary schools had been opened after the Congress went out of office.

In mid-January, 1942, the A-.I.C.C. was held at Wardha to consider afresh the new situation. Referring to the Bardoli resolution, President Azad explained wherein he and many other members of the Working Committee differed, leading to Gandhiji's decision to be relieved of the official leadership of the Congress. "Gandhiji was firmly opposed to participation in any war on the pure ground of non-violence, whereas they were opposed to it on the political grounds. The Bardoli resolution was no more than a restatement of the well-known Congress position. The bonds between the Congress and Gandhiji were indissoluble; death alone could snap them."

Addressing the All-India Congress Committee, Gandhi observed:

"I am an ordinary mortal like you. Had not that been the case, we should not have been able to work together these twenty years. Ahimsa with me is a creed, the breath of my life. But it is never as a creed that I have placed it before India or for the matter of that before anyone except in my casual informal talks. I placed it before the Congress as a political method, to be employed for the solution of the political questions. It may be it is a novel method, but it does not on that account lose its political character. As a political method, it can always be changed, modified, altered, even given up in preference to another. If, therefore, I say to you that our policy should not be given up today, I am talking political wisdom. It is political insight. It has served us in the past, it has enabled us to cover many stages towards independence, and it is as a politician that I suggest to you that it is a grave mistake to contemplate its abandonment. If I have carried the Congress with me all these years, it is in my capacity as a politician. It is hardly fair to describe my method as religious because it is new . . .

"Non-violence has brought us near to swaraj as never before. We dare not exchange it even for swaraj. For, the swaraj thus got will be no true swaraj. The question is not what we will do after swaraj. It is whether, under given conditions, we can give up non-violence to win swaraj. Again, do you expect to win real independence by abandoning non-violence? Independence for me means the independence of the humblest and poorest among us. It cannot be obtained by joining the war. For the Congress to join any war before the attainment of complete independence is to undo the work of the last twenty years.

"And yet why is it that I stand before you to plead with you to accept the resolution, and not even to divide the house? The reason is that the resolution reflects the Congress mind. It undoubtedly is a step backward. We have not a clean slate to write on. Our elders have taken a step which has produced world-wide reactions. To alter the resolution out of shape is to ignore these. It would be unwise to change the policy adopted by the Working Committee. The world had a right to think that the Working Committee's policy would be endorsed by you. At one time I had thought of dividing the A.-I.C.C., but I saw that it would be a mistake. It would be almost violence. Non-violence does not act in the ordinary way.

"Sometimes a step back is a prelude to a step forward. It is highly likely that our step will be of that character. . .

"All that the Congress has decided now to do is that it will allow the world to deal with it in terms that the world can understand, and if the terms are good enough, it will accept them. But you may be also sure that the Congress will not be easily satisfied. It will go on repeating,

'not this, not this,' until it wins the real commodity it wants. You will, therefore, say exactly what you want; and I will also say all I want. That is why I have decided to issue the three weeklies, and I will go on venting my views therein with the fullest freedom, as long as I am allowed to do so. In the meanwhile, if you can get what you want, you will strike the bargain, and you may be certain that I will not shed a single tear. I, therefore, do not want to cheat the world of its jubiliation over the resolution. I do not want the Congress to look ridiculous in the eyes of he world. I do not want it to be said that in order to retain my leadership you bade good-bye to your convictions.

"But there are the instructions about the constructive programme for Congressmen. They form the operative part. It is a substitute for civil disobedience and the parliamentary programme. Civil disobedience has been wisely reserved for me as an expert. It is good that, so long as I am alive and I am well in mind, it is so reserved. I would like to think that India will, through her non-violence, be a messenger of peace to the whole world. Even political non-violence has potency of which we have no conception, *Harijan* will deliver the message of peace from week to week. But, if this is not permitted, then will be the time for civil disobedience as a token. I want every worker to be out for constructive work. And if I am rendered penless, I may become the sole resister. But I have no fixed plan. Events will show the way."

Abdul Ghaffar resigned from the Working Committee and also the A.-I.C.C. President Azad stated: "I had long talks with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan on how to promote the constructive programme of the Congress. I found that Khan Saheb would be able to serve this purpose better if he was relieved of the membership of the Working Committee. He also emphasized that he as an out-and-out believer in non-violence in all walks of life, found himself quite at one with Gandhiji in that matter." In his statement, Abdul Ghaffar stated: "I will better be able to carry on the message of non-violence to the Pathan mind if I am detached officially from the Congress whose policy can vary according to the exigencies as they may arise from time to time. My bond with the Congress will thus be richer than hitherto."

Events were moving with lightning speed. The allies suffered reverses in Asia and Europe. On March 7, 1942 Rangoon fell. "Japan is knocking at our gates," wrote Gandhi. "What are we to do in a non-violent way? If we were a free country, things could be done non-violently to prevent the Japanese from entering the country. As it is, non-violent resistance could commence the moment they effected a landing . . .

"The best preparation for and even the expression of non-violence lies in the determined pursuit of the constructive programme . . . He who

has no belief in the constructive programme has, in my opinion, no concrete feeling for the starved millions. He who is devoid of that feeling cannot fight non-violently. In actual practice the expansion of my non-violence has kept exact pace with that of my identification with starved humanity. I am still far from the non-violence of my conception, for am I not still far away from the identification with dumb humanity?"

When Rangoon fell, it seemed as if the tide of the Japanese conquest would soon be sweeping into Bengal and Madras. On March 11, 1942 Premier Winston Churchill announced that the British War Cabinet had agreed on a plan for India and that Sir Stafford Cripps would visit India to ascertain whether this plan would secure a reasonable and practical measure of acceptance and "thus promote the concentration of all Indian thought and energies" on defence against Japan.

Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in Delhi on March 22 and interviewed the leaders of all major parties and carried on negotiations for over a fortnight. The new proposals dealt essentially with future, after the cessation of the hostilities, though there was a final clause which vaguely invited co-operation in the present. "Why did you come if this is what you have to offer?" Gandhi said to Cripps. "I would advise you to take the first plane home." Gandhi observed: "He should have known that at least the Congress would not look at dominion status even though it carried the right of secession the very moment it was taken. He knew too the proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts, each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all, it gave no real control over defence to responsible ministers."

In *Harijan* of April 26, Gandhi pleaded for the British withdrawal from India: "I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation, pure and simple, for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate, as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably, the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps, India, if the main parties composed their differences, as they most probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long run may even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen, if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position?"

In the last week of April, Rajagopalachari addressed a small gathering of his Congress supporters in the Madras legislature and carried two

resolutions for submission to the A.-I.C.C., the first recommending the acceptance of Pakistan in principle as a basis of settlement between the Congress and the League, and the second proposing the restoration of a responsible government in Madras.

The A.-I.C.C. met at Allahabad from April 29 to May 2. The feeling of resentment over the Madras resolution was so intense that Rajagopalachari resigned from the Working Committee. Having thus freed himself, Rajaji moved the Madras resolution at the A.-I.C.C. meeting. It was rejected by 120 votes to 15.

Gandhi had sent from Wardha a draft resolution for the consideration of the Working Committee. The core of the main resolution, which was carried almost without any opposition, was as follows:

"The A.-I.C.C. is convinced that India will retain her power through her own strength and will attain it likewise. The present crisis as well as the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps make it impossible for the Congress to consider any schemes or proposals which retain, even in partial measure, British control and British authority in India. Not only the interests of India but also Britain's safety and the world peace and freedom, demand that Britain must abandon her hold on India. It is on the basis of independence alone that India can deal with Britain or other nations. The committee repudiates the idea that freedom can come to India through interference or invasion by any foreign nation, whatever the professions of that nation may be. In case, an invasion takes place, it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take place in the form of non-violent non-co-operation, as the British Government have prevented the organization of the national defence by the people in any other way. The committee would, therefore, expect the people of India to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor, nor obey any of his orders. We may not look to him for favours, nor fall to his bribes. If he wants to take possession of of our homes and fields, we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him. The success of such a policy of non-co-operation and non-violent resistance to the invader will depend on the intensive working out of the Congress constructive programme and especially the programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection in all parts of the country."

When requested to comment on the move initiated by Rajagopalachari, Abdul Ghaffar told a correspondent: "You know I have resigned from the Congress. I am a soldier. I mind my work. I have always tried to keep myself out of all controversies, because I consider such controversies useless in the present circumstances." He said it was the press

which was responsible for the importance which the Pakistan issue has gained. "We have been enjoying the right of self-determination in the Frontier since a long time," he added, "and I think there could be no harm if others enjoy the same. There is no need, however, to assume that my support of the recognition of the right of self-determination means any abrupt change of our attitude."

Gandhi explained and elaborated his "Quit India" demand in the *Harijan* and in answers to the inquiring journalists. There was a new urgency and passion in his speech and writing. In a moving appeal of May 11, 1942, addressed "To Every Briton," Gandhi wrote:

"I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this very hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession and at least from India. Acceptance of my appeal will confound all the military plans of all the Axis Powers and even the military advisers of Great Britain.

"My people may or may not approve of this loud thinking. . .When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests and tears notwithstanding, slavery was abolished in law. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North; and so though the Negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the outcaste of high society. I am asking for something much higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us."

He said: "Hitherto the rulers have said, 'We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins.' My answer now is, 'Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy.' "

"I have no plan in mind," Gandhi said. "But, I think, nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation, and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that, without shedding a single drop of blood, the Japanese arms or any combination of arms can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope that it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and Chinese is enormous, and they are prepared to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether the aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique, I am asking India to risk no more than

other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered the armed resistance."

In early July, Jawaharlal Nehru issued the following statement on the happening in the Frontier Province:

"The news from the Frontier Province is scarce except such news as comes through official sources. This official or semi-official news is often tainted and contains many wrong allegations.

"Whenever I have gone to the Frontier I have had experience of the difficulty of sending out proper news through the normal agencies or otherwise. It appears that restrictions on such news being sent out are stricter in the Frontier Province than elsewhere in India. The result is that the people in the rest of India know little of what is happening in this highly important part of the country. It is important in many ways and specially so in regard to the new situation that is developing.

"Few people know of the quiet and great work that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been carrying on during the last six months. He does not believe in ostentation, but he has gone to villages seeing his people, organizing them and encouraging them in every way. Thus, he has covered the entire province.

"During the last six weeks or more a very virulent campaign has been carried on against Badshah Khan and his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, as well as generally the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. Not finding political reasons for attacking them, domestic and private matters were exploited for this purpose and all manner of false statements circulated. The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee issued a communique to the press dealing with this matter but it appears that no publicity was given to it. I am giving this communique below as issued by the Frontier Congress Committee:

"We warn the public against false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans, and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement in certain sections of the press. It has been hinted that differences have arisen among the workers and party politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them is baseless. All these so-called differences exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for office and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier Province clearly realizes that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the

parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it certainly has no place in the Frontier.

"Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful and constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of the internal security and self-sufficiency in food and cloth has further endeared him to the people, especially the poor. He has been hoping to carry his message of peace and goodwill even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees, he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and co-operation of every man and woman and child in the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the press and journalists of India, who have the true interests of the nation at heart, will take a dispassionate interest in his work."

Gandhi observed: "Badshah Khan's reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of the traducers, Khan Saheb has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have no doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before."

When the Japanese army reached Burma, Abdul Ghaffar feared that it might soon march into India: "We were worried as to how the tribals would react to it. We thought that unitedly as patriots we should face Japanese invasion and decided to send delegations to the tribal areas. In this connection I wrote to Sir George Cunningham, the Governor, to permit our delegations to contact the tribals for discussion regarding the national defence. The Governor, following the traditional policy of not permitting to do even the educational and social work among the tribals, turned down our request. We convened our jirga and decided to send our delegations to the tribal areas as the defence of the country was of utmost importance. The instructions to the Political Agents were to deal with our delegations only when they entered the tribal areas. Our delegations reached Afridis without any difficulty, but they faced trouble in Bajaur. But, ultimately, there too our delegation succeeded in doing good work."

In July, Abdul Ghaffar hinted at the defiance of the Government authority if his constructive activities were any way hindered: "There is no secret about any of our activities. Whatever we do, we do it openly. Ever since the war began, we have been devoting our entire energy to

peaceful, humanitarian work in villages, advising the people to maintain internal security at all costs in the difficult days ahead and make themselves self-sufficient in respect of food and other necessaries of life. But it seems that the Government would not allow us to accomplish this task and some of our workers have been imprisoned. No power on earth can prevent us from rendering service to people at these hazardous times. Let me declare that we are quite determined to carry out our programme undeterred and undaunted. Under no circumstance can we give up our peaceful and non-violent mission. If we have to take steps, it will be obviously under compulsion." He established a centre for his work at Sardaryab, 14 miles away from Peshawar, and he settled down there in a straw-thatched hut. The centre was known as "Markaz-i-Ala-i-Khudai-Khidmatgaran."

In July the Working Committee met at Wardha. On July 5, Gandhi spoke to President Azad for the first time on the "Quit India" movement. He insisted that the time had come when Congress should raise the demand that the British must leave India. Unlike on previous occasions, this time, he said, it should be an open rebellion and the people should resist arrest and submit to Government only if physically forced to do so. There was detailed and frank discussion, and on July 14, 1942 the committee passed the historic resolution, based on Gandhi's draft :

"The events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through, confirm the opinion of Congressmen that the British rule in India must end immediately . . . Ever since the outbreak of the world war, the Congress had studiedly pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment, carried to its logical extreme, would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives, so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It has also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's stranglehold on India.

"These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed . . . This frustration has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill will against Britain and growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms. The Working Committee view this development with grave apprehension, as this, unless checked, will inevitably lead to a passive acceptance of

aggression. The committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma, and desires to build resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign power.

"The Congress would change the present ill will against Britain into goodwill and make India a willing partner in joint enterprise of securing freedom of the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom.

". . . Only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention, can the present unreality give place to reality, and the people of India, belonging to all groups and parties, face India's problems and solve them on a mutually agreed basis. The present political parties formed chiefly with a view to attract the attention of and influence the British Power, will then probably cease to function . . . For the first time in India's history, realization will come home that princes, *jagirdars*, zamindars and propertied and monied classes derive their wealth and their property from the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially power and authority must belong . . . It is the earnest desire of the Congress to resist aggression effectively with people's united will and strength behind it.

"In making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, in any way to encourage aggression of India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied Powers. The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

"The proposal of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others . . .

"Should, however, this appeal fail, the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs, involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might

have gathered since 1920, when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the political rights and liberty . . ."

When the Working Committee resolution was published, it created a great stir in the country. A call to the people to make preparations for the coming struggle for India's freedom was made by Abdul Ghaffar, addressing the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. "You should get ready for Mahatma Gandhi's call which is expected any moment after the ratification of the Working Committee's resolution. I hope the Frontier Province as usual will be the vanguard of this struggle."

The Working Committee met in Bombay on August 5 and prepared a draft resolution in substantially the same language as the one passed at Wardha, which was placed before the All-India Congress Committee on August 7.

"Occasions like the present," said Gandhi addressing the delegates, "do not occur in everybody's and but rarely in anybody's life. I and my ahimsa are on trial today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be judged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now."

"I believe," he observed, "that in the history of the world, there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims and think of yourself as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence."

Except a handful of communists who opposed the move, all members of the A.-I.C.C. welcomed the resolution and after two days' discussions the "Quit India" resolution was passed.

Gandhi addressed the A.-I.C.C. for two hours in Hindustani and in English. Having congratulated the communists on their courage, he said that what they had asked the committee to accept through their amendments was not a correct representation of the situation. "Time was when every Musalman claimed the whole of India as his motherland," he said. "It was the spirit of courtesy, dignity and nobility that inspired us in those days. The members of each community vied with one another in accommodating members of sister communities. They respected one another's religious feelings and considered it a privilege to do so. I should ask all Musalmans, including Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah himself was at one time a

Congressman. If, today, Congress has incurred his wrath, it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his heart. May God bless him with long life, but when I am gone he will realize and admit that I had no designs on Musalmans and I had never betrayed their interests."

"To those who have been indulging in a campaign of abuse and vilification," Gandhi continued, "I would say that Islam enjoins you not to revile even an enemy. The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity. Are you followers of that Islam or any other? If you are followers of true Islam, does it behove you to distrust the words of one who makes a public declaration of his faith? You may take it from me, one day, you will regret the fact that you distrusted and killed one who was a true and devoted friend of yours. It cuts me to the quick to see that the more I appeal, the more the Maulana importunes, the more intense does the campaign of vilification grow. To me, these abuses are like bullets. They can kill me, even as a bullet can put an end to my life. You may kill me. That will not hurt me. But what of those who indulge in abusing? They bring discredit to Islam. For the fair name of Islam, I appeal to you to desist this unceasing campaign of abuse and vilification."

"Maulana Saheb is being made a target for the filthiest abuse," he remarked, "because he refuses to exert on me the pressure of his friendship. He realizes that it is misuse of friendship to seek to compel a friend to accept as truth what he knows is an untruth. To the Qaid-e-Azam I would say: 'Whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such a coercion. God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of untruth.' I appeal to you for the sake of Islam to ponder over what I say. There is neither fair play nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely to placate Mr. Jinnah. It is not my method."

In conclusion he stressed: "The actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand . . . Everyone of you from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free. The bond of the slave is snapped the moment he considers himself to be a free being. You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be

satisfied with anything short of freedom. Here is a *mantra,* a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra* is, 'do or die'. Take a pledge with God and your conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or faint-hearted."

On August 9 Gandhi and the members of the Working Committee and the A.-I.C.C. were arrested and taken in a special train to different places for detention. Serious disturbances broke out all over India when the news of the arrests became known. Hundreds of Congress leaders throughout the country were arrested.

In the Frontier the situation was calm in the beginning. Local conditions had prevented Abdul Ghaffar from attending the A.-I.C.C. session. All the powers for conducting the movement were delegated to him by the Frontier Congress Committee. While he was engaged in discussing with his workers, news came of the arrests of the Congress leaders in Bombay. Addressing a meeting at Peshawar on August 10, he pledged full support to the "Quit India" resolution. He advised the people to wait and not become impatient, and insisted that the Khudai Khidmatgars should continue to do the constructive work and to counteract all propaganda that might create panic in the province. "The time has not yet come," he said. "At present we are not in a hurry to launch a movement. We have started the picketing of liquor shops in different places and we will continue it for some time more."

Some of his colleagues suggested that they should resort to the cutting of telephone wires, removing of railway lines, and other acts of sabotage. Abdul Ghaffar was agreeable to it, provided the saboteur was prepared to hand over himself to the police and make a clean confession of his acts. "This would add," he said, "to the moral courage of the worker and set an example of uprightness and bravery to the people and also save them from being victims of harrassment and suspicion."

On September 10, 1942, three years after relinquishing the premiership of the province, Dr. Khan Sahib, aged 60, attired in a Red Shirt uniform, entered the Civil Secretariat at Peshawar as a Khudai Khidmatgar and delivered a short speech to the government employees. He was accompanied by three volunteers, one of whom read out a poem to the same effect. Dr. Khan Sahib also approached the Sessions Judge and the Judicial Commissioner's Court, where the same procedure was followed. Another batch headed by Kazi Atatullah, former minister, went to all local schools. A third batch approached all the four police stations in the Peshawar city and delivered the "Quit India" message.

Towards the end of September, Abdul Ghaffar intensified the struggle. Large batches of Khudai Khidmatgars raided Government offices and courts. In different districts, on October 4, the Khudai Khidmatgars in large numbers issued out from their camps and marched towards their appointed destinations, shouting "*Inquilab Zindabad*", and carried the tricolour flag to be hoisted on the Government buildings. All courts and offices were guarded by the military and the police. As the Khudai Khidmatgars tried to break through the cordon, they were mercilessly beaten till they fell unconscious. Most of the Red Shirts were seriously injured and they were removed to the relief centres run by the Congress. Those who did not sustain serious injuries were carried away in police vans to distant places, where they were left to walk back home. Courts were closed for a fortnight. When they were reopened the raids were repeated and so were police atrocities. Hundreds of raiders were arrested.

One day a mass march on Peshawar city was announced. Instead of arresting the volunteers the Government adopted deceitful method to frustrate the demonstration. Sir Rushbrook Williams gleefully narrates the incident thus: "The much-publicized demonstration was defeated by a ruse which is still described with chuckles of mirth up and down the Frontier. Among the political officers then stationed near by was Iskander Mirza. Knowing that the Red Shirts, like all Pathans, would never set out on their early morning march until they had consumed vast quantities of freshly baked Frontier bread, washed down with some quarts of green tea, he induced the cooks at their camp to mix masses of a very strong purgative with the rations. The march started in fine style, with much shouting of slogans; but before long, first one and then another of the marchers fell silent, broke ranks and hastily retired into a field from the view of his companions. As time went on, men fell out in increasing numbers, and it was only a weak and very hollow-feeling band of stragglers who at length crawled wearily into Peshawar."

The Frontier Government, unlike those of the other provinces, did not start any offensive against the Khudai Khidmatgars but employed numerous tricks to undermine the movement. The mullahs were hired to excite false religious sentiment; mischievous posters and handbills were freely distributed. Abdul Ghaffar warned his followers that worse trials were in store for them, and that the Government's inactivity was only temporary. They merely wanted to demonstrate to the world that the Muslims had no stake in the freedom struggle going on in the country. They knew that the news of the Khudai Khidmatgars' participation in the movement and its suppression in a totally Muslim province, would falsify their own propaganda outside. There was strict censorship on the news from the Frontier Province. The faithful account of the struggle

in the Frontier Province as narrated by Abdul Ghaffar, is as follows:

"All the powers for conducting the mass civil disobedience movement were delegated to me by our Provincial Jirga and I was appointed a dictator. I shuddered at the very word 'dictator,' because the autocracy and dictatorship I intensely dislike. I always consulted my colleagues before sending out the 'dictatorial' orders.

"According to my instructions the mass movement was launched. The courts and offices in Bannu, Kohat, Tank, Mardan and Peshawar were raided. The Government tried their best to crush the movement. A Muslim Deputy-Commissioner, Janab Iskander Mirza, avowing his traditional loyalty to the British, excelled his masters, beating to death Syed Akbar, a Khudai Khidmatgar. He went to the extent of poisoning vegetables in a Khudai Khidmatgar camp. Those who ate them were taken seriously ill. I would rather not expose his other crimes but would rather produce him before the Almighty, whom we all have to face on the Day of Judgement.

"I used to tour my province for supervising the 'Quit India' movement. One day, on way to Kohat, I was arrested at a police station on the Kohat Pass. From there I was driven back in a car to Peshawar and was released. A similar scene of arrest and release was enacted wherever I went.

"On October 27, 1942, with a batch of fifty Khudai Khidmatgars I went on foot from Charsadda to raid the District Court at Mardan. On the way we addressed public meetings in several villages. The police were waiting for us at Mirwasderi. We locked our hands together and marched on. When the police separated us, once again we closed our ranks by linking our hands. The police mercilessly beat us with lathis. A petty official, Khushdil Khan, beat me and broke two of my ribs. My clothes were bespattered with blood. He arrested us all and took us to the Mardan jail and the following day to Risalpur and then to Haripur jail. Many of our workers were lodged in the Haripur jail. They often shouted '*Inquilab Zindabad*'. Because of my presence the jail officials connived at them, but soon I was transferred to Abbottabad jail."

The Chief Secretary's secret note says the following about Abdul Ghaffar's arrest:

"After spending the night at Dargai, Abdul Ghaffar Khan proceeded on foot towards Mardan, stopping frequently for prayers and lectures. He eventually reached the police position, one mile from Mardan, at about 3 p.m. He then marched in the middle of a solid body of his men consisting of about 150, of whom 50 were in Red Shirt uniform. He refused to parley or stop; the police were, therefore, compelled to arrest or drive off the bodyguard in order to stop and arrest Abdul Ghaffar

Khan himself. Eventually after some difficulty this was done, and Abdul Ghaffar Khan was carried to the police car and driven to the lines. Abdul Ghaffar Khan fought violently and resisted every effort to remove him into car. He suffered no injuries beyond a few bruises, so a X-ray examination was not necessary."

On his jail experiences, Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"Except in the early days of the movement, the British Government, although hostile to me, did not insult or inflict injury on me. Once the Inspector-General of Prisons, Colonel Smith, visited me in a small cell in the Abbottabad jail. He chatted with me for a while and after stepping out he angrily remarked to the jail superintendent, 'You have put him in this pigeon-hole; why did you not keep him in a hospital room?' The jail superintendent respectfully told him that the Government had ordered him to do so. Col. Smith contacted the Governor, Sir George Cunningham, on the telephone and said: 'Your Excellency, is it proper to treat a brave adversary in the manner you are now treating Badshah Khan?' Sir George felt disconcerted and withdrew the order. Colonel Smith had already ordered my transfer to a suitable jail where I could also have my son, Wali, with me, and three others were transferred here to give me company.

"I was transferred back to the Haripur jail in October 1943, when most of the political prisoners were already released. It was a massive structure, consisting of large-size barracks and extensive corridors and garden around with broad roads. This jail was particularly meant for the criminals and dacoits of the Frontier Province and the surrounding areas. It had a marble-floored hospital. The prisoners were allowed to play hockey, football and other games. But the administration of this jail was brutal. The jail was used for housing the political prisoners in large numbers, who were kept in a camp, surrounded by a huge wall. Here Khudai Khidmatgars were subjected to humiliating and beastly treatment. They were forced inside the small cells and were shot. In the cold winter night they were stripped of their clothes and frequently they were caned. Many political prisoners died due to these tortures. I was subjected to personal search."

"Most of us were detenus without any jail task to perform, and so we requested the jailor to assign to us the *niwar*-making work, which brought us two rupees for a hundred feet. Many of us earned a good sum of money from it and we sent it to our centre at Sardaryab. We started literacy classes in the jail for the Khudai Khidmatgars, most of whom were illiterate, and soon they learnt to read and write.

"We read the Koran and the Gita. Amir Mahomed Khan, a poet, and Pandit Shambhunath, a Sanskrit scholar, used to explain to us the

scriptures. Prisoners belonging to different faiths assembled together to participate in the discussions. One day, when Amir Mahomed Khan was giving a discourse on the Koran, a Hindu youth expressed doubt on a particular portion of the Koran. Mahomed Khan got annoyed and said that no portion of the Holy Koran can be criticized. I intervened to say that it was not proper to get provoked on the young man's question, because if he was not able to understand any particular aspect of the Koran, it should be explained to him. Pandit Shambhunath took the classes in the Gita.

"On every Sunday all the political prisoners assembled together and sang Iqbal's 'Hindustan Hamara'. It was followed by talks, discussions and story-telling. There were recitations from Iqbal's works, which I greatly liked. At the end of the programme I used to distribute sweets to the assembled.

"We used to discuss various subjects. I dwelt upon the golden age of Islam, embodied in the tradition of the Caliphs, Abu Bakr and Omar. Abu Bakr refused to accept the Caliphate and was persuaded only with difficulty to assume the office. He wore a coarse cloak of homespun, and slept on a palm-leaf mat, and when his wife asked for extra money to provide her children with sweets for the festival of Id, he told her that this was incompatible with the standard of self-denial that was expected of Caliph. His wife, however, managed to provide sweets for her children by exercising stringent economy. This he regarded as an indication that he was drawing from *Bait-ul-mal* an allowance beyond his strict needs, and he had it reduced still further.

"Omar would not permit himself two square meals a day, when there was a scarcity of grains. It was only when supplies of corn arrived from Egypt and were distributed to the poor he allowed himself the luxury of two meals. Not satisfied with merely issuing orders, he went about incognito to make sure that the poor did not suffer privations. On one of his nocturnal rounds he passed by a poor woman's mud hut. She was lying ill on the floor, a pot was cooking on the stove, but the children were hungry and crying for food. 'Why don't you give them something to eat,' Omar asked, entering the hut. 'What am I to give them?' She asked in return. On removing the lid, the Caliph found only boiling water—a make-believe resorted to keep the children quiet. 'Why did you not go to the Caliph if you lacked food for your children?' Omar asked her. 'Why should I? Is it not the Caliph's duty to see to it?' she said in reply. 'But the Caliph has so many duties to attend to. How can he look after everything and everybody?' Omar said apologetically. She answered, 'If the Caliph could send my husband and my son to the wars on his own, should he not also look after their family?' Speechless,

Omar sent a special courier to fetch the provisions from the *Bait-ul-mal* and had the food cooked and served to the starving family in his own presence. Then alone was he satisfied. This is the tradition set by our early Caliphs."

"Colonel Smith," he further notes, "had been especially brought to the Frontier Province as Inspector-General of Prisons to deal with the Khudai Khidmatgars. A quick-tempered pakka sahib, he was deeply prejudiced against them. He once even had one Khudai Khidmatgar shot dead inside a locked *chakki*-cell. During one of his visits of inspection he came to Haripur prison. I had reared some poultry in my yard. The birds used to come and sit on my lap. Sometimes, they perched on my back and head and shoulders. Colonel Smith witnessed all this from behind me unobserved. After some time he appeared before me and said, 'Good morning, Khan Saheb, what is all this?' 'Just what you see,' I answered, and then added that it held indeed a rich lesson for them, the Britishers. He felt puzzled. I explained to him that what he had witnessed was a small illustration of the power of love. 'These feathered friends knew that they were to be eaten, that we would slaughter them, and, therefore, as a rule were afraid of man. But see how they respond to a little affection!' My remarks plunged him into deep thought. For a while he stood still and uttered not a word. After that, although our movement still continued, he was a different man. The Britishers are patriotic and brave, and they admire these qualities in others. He had a soft corner for me. Although haughty, he was a man of character. He used to say that he would not live a single day in our land if Pakistan became a reality. True to his word, he retired from service and returned home immediately after Pakistan was formed."

Intense and cruel repression throughout the country prevailed. Over sixty thousand persons had been arrested upto the end of 1942; the jails were overcrowded. Nearly six thousand volunteers were arrested in the Frontier Province alone. Protests against repression were frequent, and there were spontaneous public demonstrations. These were broken up and fired upon, the tear-gas bombs were used, and all the usual channels of giving expression to public feelings were gagged. And then all these suppressed emotions broke out and crowds gathered in cities and rural areas and came in conflict with the police and military. The crowds attacked especially what seemed to them the symbols of the British rule and power—the police stations, the post offices and the railway stations; they cut the telegraph and telephone wires, they removed the rails and damaged bridges. The communications were seriously interrupted over a large part of India. For a month or two serious disturbances continued in some parts of the country and then they slowly became sporadic.

Premier Churchill asserted in Parliament: "The Congress party has now abandoned the policy of non-violence, which Mr. Gandhi has too long inculcated in theory, and has come into the open as a revolutionary movement. The disturbances were crushed with all the weight of the Government. Larger reinforcements have reached India and the number of white troops in that country is now larger than at any time in the British connection."

In resorting to his epic fast in 1943, Gandhi stressed: "The Government goaded the people to the point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests. That violence is not any the less so because it is organized on a scale so gigantic that it indeed displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, that is, of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in other manner the repressive measures of the all-powerful Government of India."

There was no expectation that Gandhi and his colleagues would be released before the end of the protracted war. Soon after his detention, in the death of Mahadev Desai, Gandhi lost his devoted secretary. In February 1944, Kasturba, his sixty-two years' partner in life, died in the camp. A couple of months later he was released because of bad health.

During the early months of 1945 the pattern of Indian politics was rapidly changing. Though most of the leaders were still in detention, the Congress had become active both in the constructive field and in the parliamentary activities. It had abandoned its boycott of the Central Assembly and it had succeeded, in conjunction with the other parties, in securing the Government's defeat on four or five occasions.

The face of things in the Frontier Province had also changed. The Aurangzeb Khan ministry which had been installed in the place of the Congress ministry in May 1943 by the Governor, and which was keeping itself in office only by the arrest and the continued incarceration of the opposition members of the legislature, had made itself thoroughly unpopular by its cupidity, ineptitude and corruption. In March 1945, as a result of a no-confidence motion, it was overthrown, and a Congress ministry under Dr. Khan Sahib once again came into power. One of its first acts was to order the release of Abdul Ghaffar and Khudai Khidmatgar workers.

In May 1945 Germany surrendered to the allies. Indian co-operation was necessary for the early defeat of Japan. In June 1945 the Congress Working Committee members were freed, followed by general release of other political prisoners. Commenting on the situation, Gandhi said:

"The whole of India is a vast prison. The Viceroy is the irresponsible superintendent of the prison with numerous jailors and warders under

him. The four hundred millions of India are not only the prisoners. There are others similarly situated in the other parts of the earth under other superintendents.

"A jailor is as much a prisoner as his prisoner. There is no doubt a difference. From my point of view, he is worse. If there is a Day of Judgement, if there is a Judge whom we do not see but who nevertheless is much more truly than we exist for a brief moment, the judgement will go hard against the jailor and in favour of the prisoners.

"I know that I do not need to plead for non-violent India. If India has the coin with Truth on one face and Non-violence on the other, the coin has its own inestimable value which will speak for itself. Truth and non-violence must express humility at every step. They do not disdain real aid from any quarter, much less from those in whose name and for whom exploitation is being practised. If the British and the Allies aid, so much the better. Deliverance will then come sooner. If they do not, deliverance is still certain. Only the agony of the victim will be greater, the time longer. But what are agony and time if they are spent in favour of liberty, especially when it is to be brought about through truth and non-violence?"

Cabinet Mission Plan

1945–6

Gandhi met the Working Committee members in Bombay in June 21, 1945, after a separation of three years. The committee decided that the Congress invitees should participate in the Simla Conference.

On June 25 the invitees assembled at the Viceregal Lodge in Simla. They included the Presidents of the Congress and Muslim League as well as representatives of the Scheduled Castes and the Sikhs. The leader of the Congress party and the deputy-leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly and also the leaders of the Nationalist party and the European Group in the Assembly were invited. The other participants were those who then held office as the premiers in a provincial government or had recently held that office. The Hindu Mahasabha received no invitation.

The Viceroy was keen on Gandhi attending the Simla Conference. But Gandhi maintained that in a representative conference no individual, however eminent, who was not a delegate, could have a place. The Viceroy said he would like him to stay in Simla during the conference. Gandhi agreed.

In the short speech with which Lord Wavell inaugurated the conference, he affirmed his hope that its outcome would surely pave the way to a final solution of India's complex constitutional problem. The Viceroy deftly by-passed thorny points when they threatened to hold up progress. He was trying to explain that he had nowhere suggested that the Congress was a Hindu body when Jinnah launched forth on his usual charge against the Congress. A passage at arms followed.

The Viceroy: There is nothing in my proposals which characterizes Congress as a communal body.

Jinnah: We have met here as communities and Congress does not represent anybody but the Hindus.

The Viceroy: Congress represents its members.

Dr. Khan Sahib: What does Mr. Jinnah mean? I am a Congressman. Am I a Hindu or a Muslim?

The Viceroy : Leave it at that. Congress represents its members.

Opinion at the outset was optimistic. It was plainly not a question, as it was in the days of the Cripps mission, of the measure of power to be transferred to the Indians but only of its distribution among them. It was agreed that some seats on the new Executive Council should

be allotted to the Scheduled Castes and Sikhs and possibly to other minorities; and it was not contested that the Muslims were to have as many seats as the Caste Hindus. The point in dispute was who those Muslims were to be. Jinnah strongly objected to giving a liberal representation to the minorities in the council, because he believed that they would vote with the Congress.

It came to a head when on June 29 Azad and Jinnah, who had been in close contact with their Working Committees assembled at Simla, reported their failure to agree as to the strength and the composition of the Executive Council. The conference was thereupon adjourned till the 14th July for further informal consultation, and Lord Wavell asked the leaders to provide him with the lists from which he might select the personnel of the new Executive Council.

By July 7, the Congress and all the minor parties submitted the lists to the Viceroy. Only the Muslim League refused to do so, although, at the same time, it had refrained from breaking off the negotiations. It was understood that the Congress list was, in effect, a recommendation for the composition of the council as a whole; that it, therefore, included representatives of all the major parties, including Jinnah and two other members of the League; and that the names of only five Congressmen were submitted, two of whom were Azad and Asaf Ali. Azad made it explicit that the inclusion of these two Muslims in the Congress panel was a matter of principle. "Congress is essentially a national organization and cannot possibly be a party to arrangement that prejudices its national character and tends to impair its growth of nationalism and reduces Congress to a communal body."

Jinnah declined to submit a list on the League's behalf without an assurance that all the Muslim members of the council would be members of the Muslim League. So, when the conference met on July 14, Lord Wavell announced its breakdown.

"If the conference had not broken down because of Jinnah's opposition," observed Maulana Azad, "the result would have been that the Muslims, who constituted only about twenty-five per cent of the total population of India, would have had seven representatives in a council of fourteen. This is evidence of the generosity of the Congress and throws a lurid light on the stupidity of the Muslim League. We had gone as far as we could to meet the wishes of Mr. Jinnah, but we could not accept his claim that the Muslim League was the sole representative and authoritative organization of the Muslims of India. In the provinces where Muslims were in a majority, there was no League ministry. There was a Congress ministry in the Frontier Province. It could not, therefore, be claimed that the Muslim League represented all the Muslims.

There was in fact a large bloc of Muslims who had nothing to do with the Muslim League."

"It grieves me to think," wrote Gandhi to the Viceroy, "that the conference which began so happily and so hopefully should have ended in apparent failure . . . I must not hide from me the suspicion that the deeper cause is perhaps the reluctance of the official world to part with power, which the passing of virtual control into the hands of their erstwhile prisoners would have meant."

It was a period of uncertainty. On July 25, at the Attock Bridge, Abdul Ghaffar was informed that his entry into the district of Attock could not be permitted, though he might pass through the district on his way to Abbottabad. He insisted on visiting the Chach area to meet his friends. The district authorities took him to Abbottabad and released him there.

Explaining the circumstances under which Abdul Ghaffar had been prohibited to enter the Attock district, the Punjab Government said:

"The Attock district authorities received the information that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan proposed to visit the district on July 25 and that the arrangements had been made for him to preside over a number of public meetings in the Chach. They also had information that arrangements had been made for the counter-demonstrations and that certain supporters of the Muslim League planned to greet Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan with black flags. Hearing that there would be a breach of the peace if the arrangements were allowed to be carried into effect, the District Magistrate banned the entry of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan into the Attock district and prohibited him from delivering any speeches in the Attock district. The order had been served on him before he left Peshawar.

"It has been stated that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan did not intend to deliver any speeches in the Attock district, but no intimation from him to this effect was received by the District Magistrate until the evening of the day on which he arrived at the Attock Bridge and was detained there. In the meantime, further case for anticipating a disturbance had arisen.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan reached the Attock Bridge at about 11 a. m. on July 25 and was informed that his entry into the district could not be permitted, though he might pass through the district on his way to Abbottabad, if he so wished. He refused to pass through the district and insisted on visiting the Chach. He was not permitted to proceed further and he remained at the Attock Bridge sitting by choice at the roadside although he was informed that he could wait in the tent provided for officials of the Civil Supplies Department.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not arrested but remained at the bridge until the evening when the District Magistrate decided that he should be removed from the Attock district in accordance with the provision of rule 26(4) of Defence of India Rules.

"The next day Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan came to Campbellpur by train. His entry into the Attock district was still banned, and he had made no arrangements to proceed further. So the district authorities arranged for his journey to Abbottabad. He was taken to Abbottabad in a military lorry, accompanied by a sub-inspector of police.

"The Punjab Government have no wish to question Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's statement that he had no personal intention of addressing any meeting in the Attock district. Nevertheless, arrangements had been made to hold meeting in the Chach area and the District Magistrate had reliable information that counter-demonstrations were to be organized. The recent unfortunate happenings in a neighbouring state show how real is the danger when demonstrations by one political party are met by counter-demonstrations staged by another political party."

In August there was a demonstration against the proceedings of the National Conference of the Jammu and Kashmir State at Shivpur, in which Abdul Ghaffar and Nehru participated. Abdul Ghaffar, instead of getting angry, congratulated the hostile demonstrators, as, so far, the Kashmiris, he said, were afraid of their own shadows.

On July 26, in less than a fortnight after the Simla Conference, the Labour Government came into power in Great Britain, while two weeks later the surrender of Japan finally brought the war to an end. On August 21st came the announcement that the general elections to the central and provincial legislatures would be held at the earliest possible date and that the Viceroy was returning to London for consultation. On September 19, in a broadcast speech delivered simultaneously in England and in India by the Prime Minister and the Viceroy, it was announced that the British Government intended, as soon as possible, after the elections and after consultation with the representatives of the legislative assemblies, to bring into being a constitution-making body, and meanwhile immediate consideration was to be given to the contents of a treaty "which will require to be concluded between Great Britain and India". It was also announced that the Viceroy had been authorized, as soon as the election results were known, to take steps to form an Executive Council.

A meeting of the Working Committee was convened in Poona from September 12 to September 18 and again in Bombay on September 21. Azad presided. Gandhi was present at most of the sittings. Among the several resolutions adopted, one on the united India was as follows:

"In accordance with August 1942 resolution it will be for a democratically elected Constituent Assembly to prepare a constitution for the government of India, acceptable to all the sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the residuary powers vesting in the units. The fundamental rights as laid down by the Karachi Congress, and subsequently added to, must form an integral part of the constitution. And further . . . the Congress cannot agree to any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component state or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or the Federation. The Congress has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity, and any break in the unity, especially in the modern world, when the people's minds, inevitably, think in terms of ever larger federations, would be injurious to all concerned and exceedingly painful to contemplate."

Nevertheless, the committee also declared: "It cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will." While recognizing this principle, every effort should be made to create conditions which will help the different units in developing a common and co-operative national life. "The acceptance of the principle inevitably involves that no changes should be made which result in fresh problems being created and compulsion being exercised on other substantial groups within that area. Each territorial unit should have the fullest possible autonomy within the Union, consistently with a strong national state."

The All-India Congress Committee commenced its session in Bombay on September 21. Moving the resolution on the Viceroy's speech Sardar Patel characterized the proposals as "vague, inadequate and unsatisfactory". The resolution criticized the narrow franchise to the Central Assembly and the gross imperfections of the electoral rolls. It called for the lifting of bans and disqualifications and restrictions on the political parties and organizations; it said that everyone sentenced for political activities must be released. It condemned Wavell's proposals because they left a corrupt and incompetent administration in power for many months more and regarded it as a proof of the desire to hold on to power. Nevertheless, the Congress would contest the elections to demonstrate the will of the people on the issue of immediate transfer of power.

Gandhi was present in most of the Working Committee meetings, but he did not attend the A.-I.C.C. He was keeping indifferent health. Abdul Ghaffar was mostly with Gandhi. Addressing the Karnatak delegates to the A.-I.C.C. on August 25, Abdul Ghaffar said that to serve humanity was to serve God, and this could be done only through non-violent means. Non-violence was a great philosophy. And only through

non-violence one could fight violence effectively. The Frontier Province had experimented in both. But the lesson they could draw from their experiences was that where violence failed, non-violence could achieve tremendous success. While violence caused destruction to fellow-men and could be easily put down, every move to suppress non-violence not only failed miserably, but rendered the hands of non-violence stronger.

Recalling the 1942 movement, Abdul Ghaffar said that the happenings during that upsurge proved that there was martial spirit not only in the Frontier men but also in all classes of Indians. But there was some difference: The Frontier people were not only martial but they had equipment of violence too with them and that, they were capable of greater violence. However, violent incidents occurred more frequently elsewhere than in the Frontier Province. When he was asked by his men why they also should not resort to violence, he told them that by resorting to those methods they would be endangering the lives of their fellow-men. Not only that, but he was confident that violence would not achieve anything and would be surely crushed. Independence could be snatched from the British hands only through non-violent means.

Even the most ferocious type of violence would be conquered by this mighty force. The British, while they could suppress violence ruthlessly, were so stunned by non-violence that every attempt of theirs to crush this spirit of the people failed. He also cited the examples of Germany and Japan who in spite of their armed might, could not achieve any success. The prevalence of this cult of violence meant total destruction in store for the world. Humanity must be saved at all cost. And there was this new spirit for that—non-violence.

Referring to the Hindu-Muslim question, he stressed that the Musalmans were the brethren of the Hindus. They had to join their hands in the task of driving away the British who cunningly sowed the seeds of dissension to an extent that even children were taught to talk in terms of Hindus and Muslims.

He expressed delight at the great enthusiasm shown by the girls and boys in this part of the country in national work. It was heartening to see that the women took keen interest in the struggle for independence. Indeed, the women had a great part to play. "While we showed respect in the Frontier to our women, we did not give them equal opportunities. But our women are now gradually coming forward and they will fight shoulder to shoulder with men."

A meeting of the Working Committee had been fixed up in Calcutta in the first week of December, during Gandhi's visit to Bengal. The main item on the agenda was the election manifesto. Gandhi felt that the best preparation for the election was for the Congress to set its own

house in order. As he saw it, the Congress had attained its unrivalled position in the country as a result of its policy of non-violence. It could rise to still greater heights by further developing its policy. But in that regard it seemed to be retrogressing instead of advancing. He deliberately had said not a word that might be construed as a condemnation of anything that the people had done after the arrest of the Congress leaders in 1942. But the Congress, he strongly felt, could not afford to keep silent over it. Then there was the question of the election expenses. He said that real victory of the Congress would be only if they won without spending anything. He did not mind risking defeat by sticking to that principle. The bulk of his recommendations were adopted by the Working Committee.

In Calcutta, Abdul Ghaffar discussed with Gandhi the Frontier situation and told him that he did not wish to work for the elections, and Gandhi supported him. The Congress Parliamentary Board, in vain, tried to persuade him to take part in the election campaign. He stuck to his resolve and toured his province for organizational work. He also studied closely the working of the government machinery. He found it working against the Khudai Khidmatgars. The students of the Islamia College of Peshawar and of other schools and colleges of the Frontier Province, the Punjab, Aligarh and several other places were brought to the Frontier for canvassing votes for the Muslim League. Some schools and colleges were closed in the Frontier Province at the behest of the British authorities to participate in the elections. Many girls led by the society ladies also canvassed for the League, and some English women approached the voters in support of the Muslim League to exploit the chivalrous nature of the Pathans. The services of Muslim divines from the Punjab and the Frontier were utilized in favour of the League.

"When I saw the English men and women actively participating in the election I changed my mind, and for one month before the voting I plunged in the campaign," narrates Abdul Ghaffar. "The election was fought on the issue of Hindustan or Pakistan, Hindu or Musalman, Islam or Kafir. 'Will you choose a mosque or a temple?' the Leaguers asked the voters. The Pakhtuns were not like the Muslims in India. They had political sense and they could not be misled by empty slogans, such as, 'Islam in danger'. They know what Islam really means. Their active participation in the national movement and their services to the people aroused in them political consciousness.

"At the time of polling, the British authorities and their henchmen put all their weight on the side of the Muslim League and they worked against Khudai Khidmatgars. But with God's grace, the Muslim League was defeated and our party came out victorious.

"The Britishers and their administrative machinery had excelled the Muslim Leaguers in working against us during the elections. This was so repugnant to us that we were against the formation of a ministry. We decided that unless we were free to inquire and punish such officials who had participated in the elections, violating the service rules, we should refuse to form a ministry. When Dr. Khan Sahib came to know of our decision, he informed Sardar Patel of it. Sardar Patel deputed Maulana Azad to settle the issue. The Maulana brought from Delhi a letter from the Viceroy, agreeing to our conditions in vague terms. We decided to form a ministry on condition that the full authority will vest in the Central Committee, and the ministers will act on its advice."

The Congress achieved an absolute majority in all the provinces, except in Bengal, the Punjab and Sind. In Bengal the Muslim League was the largest single party and captured almost half the seats. In the Punjab, the Unionist party and Muslim League were balanced in almost equal numbers. The Unionist ministry was formed with Congress help. In Sind also, the Muslim League won a large number of votes but it could not achieve a majority. The League ruled Sind with the help of the Governor. In these three provinces the Muslim population was in majority and the Muslim League had carried on propaganda to arouse religious fanaticism and communal passions. This clouded the political issues so much that Muslims who stood on Congress or any other ticket had great difficulty in even securing a hearing from the people. In the Frontier Province, where the Muslim majority was the largest, all the efforts of the Muslim League failed and the Congress was able to form the government. The Muslim League captured almost all the Muslim seats in the Central Assembly as well as in the provincial legislatures except in the Frontier Province, where the Congress captured not only the majority of the seats but the majority of Muslim seats as well.

The stage was thus set for the reconstitution of the Viceroy's Executive Council with the support of the major political parties and for convening a constitution-making body. A despatch which the Viceroy had sent to Whitehall in December 1945, while the general elections were in progress, drew the attention of the British Cabinet to the changed situation in India and the growing unpopularity of the Government among all sections. Sooner or later they would have to reckon with the Congress. After the elections, the despatch went on to say, the Congress was sure to present its demand even in more extreme form if some action to resolve the dead-lock was not taken in the meantime, and it would become very difficult to resist it then. The Congress might even resort to direct action to enforce its demand, and in that case the Government would find itself without any supporter—not even the princes. Even the

army was affected. The mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy ratings had its effect. The under-trial members of the Indian National Army, who had fought the British in Burma under the leadership of Netaji Bose for India's independence, were lionized by the people. Sensing the prevailing mood in India, the British Government decided not to leave the work of negotiating a settlement of the Indian question in the hands of the Viceroy alone. On February 19, 1946, it was announced in the Parliament that a mission consisting of three Cabinet Ministers would shortly proceed to India in order to give effect to the programme outlined in the Viceregal announcement of September 1945. And this was followed by a significant speech by Prime Minister Attlee in a debate in the House of Commons. In the course of it he stated: "India must choose what will be her future constitution. If she elects for independence, in our view she has the right to do so . . . We are very mindful of the rights of the minorities, but we cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority . . ." He went on to say that he did not wish to stress the differences between Indians, for, in spite of all differences and divisions, the Indians were united in their desire for freedom. He frankly admitted that the conception of nationalism had continually become stronger and it now permeated even the soldiers who had rendered splendid service in the world war. He concluded by announcing that the Cabinet Mission was going out in a positive mood and with the resolve to succeed.

The three members of the Cabinet Mission, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Alexander, arrived in India on March 23, 1946. For the first half of April, the Cabinet Mission occupied themselves with interviewing representative Indians belonging to all groups and parties. They then adjourned for a short recess to review the results of their interviews. On April 27 they invited the Presidents of the Congress and of the Muslim League to meet them in a tripartite conference in "still another attempt" to obtain an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League on the following fundamental principles:

"The future constitutional structure of British India to be as follows: A Union Government dealing with the following subjects: the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. There will be two groups of the provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces, dealing with all other subjects which the provinces in the respective groups desire to be dealt in common. The provincial governments will deal with all other subjects and will have all the residuary sovereign rights."

The conference met at Simla from May 5 to May 12. There was at this time a preponderance of Muslim population in five out of twelve

provinces, namely, in Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Sind and Bengal, representing a total population of a little over nine crores as against nineteen crores Hindus and others in the seven Hindu-majority provinces. Among the "suggested points of agreement" between the Congress and the Muslim League which were placed before the members on behalf of the Cabinet Mission in the course of the conference, was parity of representation "in the legislature of the Union . . . from the Muslim-majority provinces and from the Hindu-majority provinces, whether or not these or any of them have formed themselves into groups. The Government of the Union shall be constituted in the same proportion as the legislature."

The four Congress representatives, Azad, Nehru, Patel and Abdul Ghaffar, participated in the conference. At the request of the Congress Working Committee and the Cabinet Mission, Gandhi too was present. An indication as to the trend of the Simla talks was revealed in Gandhi's prayer speech on May 12. Referring to the spate of false rumours, that there had been a breakdown in the talks, that the Cabinet Mission was returning home without doing anything, and the Indian leaders would again return empty-handed as they did from the Simla Conference last time, he stated that it was not the conference like the one they had had last year. The Cabinet Mission was here to find out how best they could implement their decision to quit and to remove their power from India. It was their duty, if they could, to try to bring about an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League. The conference was being held for that purpose. But, even if the conference failed of its purpose, no one need be disappointed. For, those who have faith in God must be patient and brave. Supposing, the people were going to be deceived, they must stand up and face the consequences bravely. He had no reason to believe that the Cabinet Mission was here to deceive them. They were trying to leave in an orderly manner so that the Indians may be able to live in peace. There was no need to worry. Man had to do his duty. God had given him strength and discernment to do so.

Lest, in their anxiety for their own future, they might forget their own duty towards those whom they had condemned as the lowliest of the low, he had sent Abdul Ghaffar to visit and report on the conditions of the sweepers' quarters in Simla. The report which Badshah Khan had brought him, filled him with anger and grief. He had heard of it before, and what Badshah Khan told him confirmed it that the quarters in which they were forced to live were not fit for animals, much less for the human beings. Some of them had been to see him in the morning with a long tale of woe. It was the bounden duty of the residents of Simla to look into their grievances and have them redressed.

Giving the impressions of the Simla Conference, Abdul Ghaffar says:

"On the second day of the conference, we decided to inquire from the Cabinet Mission whether the Britishers were now prepared to give freedom to India and withdraw their army. We were eager that this vital issue should not be side-tracked during the negotiations. Jawaharlal Nehru put this apt question to the conference at the very beginning. Lord Wavell remarked that they were prepared to leave India, but to whom was the question. The Congress and the League should first come to a settlement. Nehru remarked, 'Give India to Muslims, but you must quit.' Jinnah was greatly impressed by Nehru's sincerity and said that they will settle it amongst themselves. The conference was adjourned. Nehru and Jinnah retired to another room for discussion. After an hour or two they came out with a proposal that a three-member committee should be appointed within two days by the Congress and the Muslim League and iron out all the differences. On the third day, when Lord Pethick-Lawrence inquired from Jinnah about the result, he denied everything. I called aside Abdur Rab Nishtar and asked him to request Jinnah not to go back on his decision, as Gandhiji, in my presence, told the Congress delegation to grant everything the Muslims demanded and agreed upon mutually. Nishtar went and stood behind Jinnah to have a talk with him, but Jinnah did not even look at him. Negotiations failed. In fact, the Britishers did not want the Muslims and Hindus to unite and were bent upon dividing India."

The Cabinet Mission, the Viceroy and the invitees moved down to Delhi. Gandhi was glad to be back in the sweepers' colony. The public prayer was resumed from the very first day of his arrival. The Koranic prayer was led by Abdul Ghaffar, who said that all prayer in whatever language or form, whatever religion it was, was the prayer addressed to one and the same God and taught mankind that all belonged to one family and should bear love to one another.

Echoing Badshah Khan's words Gandhi said it was a travesty of true religion to consider one's own religion as superior and the other's as inferior. All religions enjoined worship of one God who was all-pervasive. "And even those who worship idols, worship not the stone of which it is made, they try to see God who resides in it." The various religions were like the leaves on a tree. No two leaves were alike, and yet there was no antagonism between them or between the branches on which they grew. "Even so, there is an underlying unity in the variety which we see in God's creation."

Speculation as to the contents of the impending announcement of the Cabinet Mission had reached a feverish height. Friends had been asking as to what the statement was likely to contain. He did not know, nor did

he speculate. It was no use giving a thought as to what it would contain. A man of prayer could not do otherwise. Good or bad, they would know all in another twenty-four hours, and it would then be open to them to accept or reject it. Instead of looking onwards, let them search inward and ask God what their duty was in either event.

The Cabinet Mission duly announced that the Simla Conference had failed, and on May 16 they published their own plan consisting of two parts: a long-term plan for setting up a constitution-making body and a short-term proposal for the formation of an Interim Government having the support of all the major political parties. While rejecting the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, they recommended in its place a three-tier scheme, foreshadowed in their "suggested points for agreement" at Simla. The top tier would consist of a Union of British India and the princely states, dealing with the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications. The bottom tier would consist of provinces and states in whom would vest all the residuary powers. This was coupled with a provision to give to the provinces freedom to form groups with the executives and legislatures. These would constitute the middle tier.

The plan divided the country into three sections—A, B and C—as the mission felt that this would give a greater sense of assurance to the minorities. Section B would include the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. It would constitute a Muslim majority area. In Section C, which included Bengal and Assam, the Muslims would have a small majority over the rest. The Cabinet Mission thought that this arrangement would give complete assurance to the Muslim minority and satisfy all legitimate fears of the League.

Commenting on the document, Gandhi avowed in his prayer speech that it was not an award. The Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy had tried to bring the parties together, but they could not bring about an agreement. And so they had recommended to the country what in their opinion was worthy of acceptance by the constituent assembly. It was open to that body to vary it, reject it or improve upon it. There was no "take it or leave it" business about their recommendations. If there were restrictions, the constituent assembly would not be a sovereign body, free to frame a constitution of independence for India. Thus, the mission had suggested for the Centre certain subjects. It was now open to the assembly by the majority vote of Muslims and non-Muslims separately, to add to them or even reduce them. And it was open to the assembly to abolish the distinction which the mission had felt forced to recognize. Similarly, about grouping. The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will to belong to a group, even if the idea of grouping was accepted. He instanced only

two things to illustrate his point. He had not exhausted the list of things which seemed to him to be open to objection or improvement.

Subject to the above interpretation, which he held was right, he told them that the Cabinet Mission had brought forth something of which they had every reason to be proud. Whatever the wrong done to India by British rule, if the statement of the mission was genuine, as he believed it was, it was in discharge of an obligation which they had declared the British owed to India,—to get off India's back. It contained the seed to convert this land of sorrow into one without sorrow and suffering.

On Sunday, May 19th, Abdul Ghaffar again addressed the prayer gathering. His theme was the meaning and significance of prayer. The object of prayer, *prarthana* or *namaz*, was the same—to purge ourselves of all dross and baseness, so as to enable us to realize the bond of unity with the entire human family. Unfortunately, mankind had today lost its essential oneness and had got divided up into mutually antagonistic groups. All this was the result of a tragic delusion. "Prayer should fit one for service not of a particular section or community but of God's entire creation, for which He has sent us into this world."

In an appeal to all to rise above their narrow outlook and to look at the picture of freedom for India as a whole, Abdul Ghaffar emphasized on May 23: "I am a Khudai Khidmatgar, and service of God for me is service of humanity. Islam teaches me that and I have endeavoured to follow that noble teaching by trying to serve all people. Neither religion nor anything else that is good can flourish in slavery. Therefore, the freedom of India is essential for me and that means the freedom and well-being of all who live in this country. It seems obvious to me that freedom can only flourish in India on a basis of amity and co-operation of all the different communities. I have worked to this end and shall continue to do so. It is not through hatred and ill will that India or any community in India will to prosper."

Interim Government

1946

Gandhi sought clarification from the Cabinet Mission in regard to the legal and the moral aspect of the issue in a series of letters and interviews. He put forth the view that if the document meant what it said, then since the Cabinet Mission had stated that the basis of their whole plan of May 16 was voluntary, it should be possible to remove by the method of legal interpretation whatever discrepancy there might be between the wording of their statement and the substance that was intended to be conveyed.

The power of settling the constitution for a province and the final opting out was taken out of the hands of the province and transferred to the majority in the section, who could force a province to join or remain in a particular group even against the wishes of the representatives of that province. The Congress contended that this introduced into the plan an element of compulsion. In its meeting of May 24, 1946, the Congress Working Committee, therefore, while withholding its final opinion on May 16 plan, resolved that to remove the inconsistency between the various clauses of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 and to make the clauses consistent with each other, the committee interpreted para 15 of the statement to mean that "in the first instance the respective provinces shall make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed." At the same time they set themselves to examine some other aspects of the Cabinet Mission's plan so as to have a full picture of the connected problems involved in the setting up of the constitution-making body.

Following upon the Working Committee's resolution of May 24th, there was a brief lull in the negotiations pending the decision of the Muslim League. On June 6 the Muslim League accepted the Cabinet Mission's plan as it saw "seeds of Pakistan" inherent in it by virtue of compulsory grouping of the six Muslim-majority provinces in sections B and C.

The formation of an Interim Government at the Centre, in the meantime, had hardly made any progress. The Muslim League would have nothing to do with a plan for the Interim Government which in any way jeopardized the attainment of Pakistan. The Congress, on the other hand, while it was wedded to the ideal of an undivided India, maintained that the nature of the constitution for India to be framed was

essentially for the constitution-making body to decide. The function of the Interim Government was effectively to maintain the administration while the constitution for independence was being settled. It should, therefore, consist of homogeneous elements who would work together harmoniously as a team. The quickest and the best way to achieve this, Gandhi held, was to entrust the formation of the Government either to the Muslim League or to the Congress, whichever commanded the British Government's confidence. The attempt to please both parties would only result in interminable delay besides creating an explosive mixture of incompatibles. The British Government should, therefore, take the risk of making the choice between the one or the other. But the Cabinet Mission could not be persuaded to take that view. And so the attempt to constitute an Interim Government at the Centre on the basis of parity in one form or other continued. The attempt failed and, on June 16, the Viceroy issued a statement abandoning further negotiations and putting forth his own proposal for the formation of an Interim Government: "In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of May 16."

After several modifications, the composition of the Interim Government was settled on the basis of 14 members, six being members of the Congress including one from the Scheduled Castes, five members of the Muslim League, one Sikh, one Indian Christian and one Parsi. On June 18 the Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution accepting the long-term plan of May 16 and the short-term plan of June 16 about the formation of the Interim Government, but it was decided to communicate it to the Cabinet Mission after the concurrence of Abdul Ghaffar was obtained.

In the meantime, on June 19, news leaked out that Jinnah had asked for and received certain assurances from the Viceroy. One of these was to the effect that a Nationalist Muslim would not be permitted to be included in the Interim Government even out of the Congress quota without the assent of the Muslim League. The Working Committee was hurriedly resummoned to consider the whole situation. On June 25 the committee decided to reject the short-term proposal about the formation of the Interim Government while accepting the long-term plan of the Cabinet Mission about the constitution-making body, subject to their interpretation of the disputed clauses in regard to grouping which they offered to submit to the arbitration of the Federal Court whose decision would be binding upon both.

The same day, the Council of the Muslim League adopted a resolution accepting a short-term proposal about the formation of the Interim Government. The Muslim League had expected that after the Congress decision rejecting the plan for the formation of the Interim Government, the League would be called upon to form an Interim Government all by itself. But the Cabinet Mission ruled that the Congress Working Committee's resolution was an "acceptance" of their long-term plan of May 16 and, therefore, both the Congress and the Muslim League had qualified for inclusion in the Interim Government. But since one of the major parties had declined to join the Interim Government, the scheme for coalition Government became void, "because it would no longer be a coalition and we should have to find some other Interim Government of those who accepted the scheme of 16th May." Jinnah called the Cabinet Mission's decision "a breach of faith."

By the end of June the Cabinet Mission returned to England, leaving Lord Wavell to continue the effort for the formation of the Interim Government. The All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay in July and, after an appeal by Gandhi, endorsed the Working Committee's decision in favour of the Cabinet Mission plan of May 16. Azad retired from the presidentship, after seven years' tenure, in favour of Jawaharlal Nehru.

In his passionate appeal to the delegates, Gandhi stated: "Because of what has appeared in the press, an impression seems to have been created that I said one thing at Delhi and am saying something different now. I did say in one of my speeches at Delhi with regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals that I saw darkness where I saw light before. That darkness has not yet lifted. If possible, it has deepened. I could have asked the Congress Working Committee to turn down the proposal about the constituent assembly, if I could see my way clearly. Whilst my heart was filled with misgivings, I could not adduce any reason for it, otherwise I would have asked them to reject the proposals straight away. It was my duty to place my misgivings before them to put them on their guard. But they should examine what I said in the cold light of reason and accept my viewpoint only if they were convinced of its correctness. Their decision which they have arrived at after prolonged deliberations and which is almost unanimous, is before you. The members of the Congress Working Committee are your faithful and tried servants. I am willing to admit that the proposed constituent assembly is not the parliament of the people. It has many defects. But you are all seasoned and veteran fighters. A soldier is never afraid of danger. He revels in it. If there are shortcomings in the proposed constituent assembly it is for you to get them removed. It should be a challenge to

combat, and not a ground for rejection. I told Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the crown of thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed. The constituent assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you, but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it. I regard the constituent assembly as the substitute of satyagraha. It is constructive satyagraha. The alternative is the constructive work which you have never done justice to.

" Let us not be cowardly but approach our task with confidence and with courage. Let not the fear of being deceived dismay us. No one can deceive a satyagrahi. Never mind the darkness that fills my mind. He will turn it into light."

The Muslim League Council, withdrew its previous acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's plan on July 28. At the same time, it resolved to launch "direct action" to achieve Pakistan. August 16 was declared as "Direct Action Day" to be observed all over India as a day of protest.

The Congress Working Committee met on August 8 and reaffirmed the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's plan in its entirety. The committee appealed to the Muslim League and all the others concerned, in the wider interests of the nation as well as of their own, to join in this great task. On August 12, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress President, was invited by the Viceroy to form an Interim Government. Jinnah rejected Nehru's invitation to co-operate in the formation of an Interim Government. Later, on August 15, Nehru met Jinnah at his house but nothing came out of their talk and the situation rapidly deteriorated.

"The 17th of August 1946 was a black day in the history of India," noted Maulana Azad. "There was a general sense of anxiety in Calcutta, which was heightened by the fact that the government was under the control of the Muslim League and Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy was the Chief Minister. Unprecedented mob violence plunged the great city of Calcutta in an orgy of bloodshed, murder and terror. Hundreds of lives were lost. Thousands were injured, and property worth crores of rupees was destroyed. Processions were taken out by the League, which began to loot and commit acts of arson. Soon the whole city was in the grip of *goondas* of both communities. The military and the police were standing by but remained inactive while innocent people were being killed."

After the Calcutta happenings, and even before the Interim Government was formed, the Viceroy began to press for the inclusion anyhow of the Muslim League in the Interim Government. In a meeting with the Congress leaders, he asked them unconditionally to accept, as the price for bringing the Muslim League into the Government, the Cabinet Mission's interpretation of the provision for grouping in the statement of May 16th as against their own, and threatened not to summon the

constituent assembly if this was not done. Gandhi thereupon sent a message to the members of the British Cabinet that the Viceroy seemed to be completely unnerved and needed to be assisted by an abler and legal mind. The British Cabinet intervened and under their instructions, on September 2, 1946, an Interim Government was formally installed at the centre with Jawaharlal Nehru as the leader.

For Gandhi it was a day of deep significance. In the early hours of the morning, he sat down to draft a note for Nehru as to the duty of the members of the new Government in this supreme hour. The substance of the note, Gandhi amplified in the evening prayer discourse. Hailing the auspicious day as the red-letter day in India's history, he described it as only a step towards Complete Independence, which was yet to come. It was not a day for rejoicing or jubilation. Their ministers had reluctantly agreed to accept responsibility for the Interim Government without the Muslim League, which was undeniably a powerful organization of the Muslims. The Muslim League had refused to come in. The Muslims were their brothers. Both the Hindus and the Muslims were sons of India. All those who are born in this country and claim her as their motherland, whether they be Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Jew or Christian, Jain or Sikh, are equally her children and are, therefore, brothers, united together with a bond stronger than that of blood.

Today, the Musalmans looked askance at the Hindus and rightly or wrongly the Muslim League had come to believe that Hindus had bypassed and deceived it and was, therefore, angry. Muslims were observing the day as a day of mourning. They did not cease to be their brothers on that account. One could not return one's brother's anger with anger. Whilst, therefore, they could not join the Muslims in their mourning, it was up to them to try to come as close together as possible and spare them provocation by abstaining from jubilation, rejoicing and other exuberant manifestations such as feasting and illuminations. Exuberant manifestations were hardly in keeping with the solemnity of the occasion. The proper way of observing the solemn occasions as enjoined by Islam, Christianity and Hinduism was by fasting rather than feasting.

The people should utilize the occasion to turn the searchlight inward and try to find out if they had really done their Muslim brothers any injustice. If there was any, it should be openly admitted and remedied. At the same time he would respectfully tell the Muslim League that it was neither logical nor right to regard both the British and the Hindus as their enemies and to threaten them with direct action. It could not ride two horses at the same time. If the Muslim League non-co-operated with the British, it should imply co-operation among themselves. Why then should they non-co-operate with their own brothers? The Congress

could never ally itself with Great Britain against Muslims. It had today accepted responsibility for the Interim Government for the sole purpose of attaining freedom for all alike, including the Muslim League, not for any particular section or community. It was wrong for the Muslims to regard the Hindus as their enemies and seek to forget that they had lived together as good neighbours for many centuries, were born in the same land, were nourished by the same soil and were destined to be returned as dust to the same soil. He would go so far as to say that the Muslim League attitude was un-Islamic. The remedy for injustice, if there was any, is to reason together or to refer the dispute to arbitration in the last resort if mutual discussion failed.

What was the first duty of the ministers, he further asked and replied that their first act should be to remember the salt satyagraha and remove the salt tax. It symbolized the Congress pledge to win freedom for the toiling masses. It was now time to redeem that pledge and to make the poor man's salt as free as water and air. It was not the quantum of taxation but the fact of salt being free or not that made all the difference to the poor. Removal of salt tax would take the message of swaraj into the huts of the poorest.

And the second task before the ministers was the early realization of communal unity. If he had his way, he would declare that hereafter the military would not be used for the preservation of internal peace. He would like to see even the use of the police banned for that purpose. The people must find other means to prevent the communities from flying at each other's throat. If the worst came to the worst, they must have the guts to fight it out among themselves without external aid. He ventured to say that so long as they needed the help of the British arms for their security, their slavery would continue.

Then there was the total eradication of untouchability, and lastly there was the pledge of khadi to be redeemed to provide clothing to the poor villagers. He hoped fervently that the Interim Government would give the right lead and put India on the road to truth and purity and real swaraj.

Addressing the Khudai Khidmatgars at Daube in the Frontier on September 14, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"By the grace of God here we have none who is not acquainted with our programme, but we neglect its practical application. Whether a member of the jirga or a Khudai Khidmatgar, you all shirk work. You are penny-wise and pound-foolish. The crop is ready and ripe. If you continue to keep busy with petty things, you will miss to reap the harvest. I have visited every district and village of our province. I was told that some big Khan accompanied by the divines had come and held

conferences. I came to know that the Khudai Khidmatgar workers were busy serving in the syndicates and in ration shops. I am not disparaging the jirga members or the Khudai Khidmatgars, but I insist on having few, yet sincere, workers who should work with zeal as they did before. I want them to serve God's creatures in His name without taking any reward for their services. They should work among the people.

"Ours is a spiritual and moral movement which can be nurtured only by those who are patient and tolerant. One sincere worker of character strengthens the party, whereas a characterless member harms it. Many people approach me with exasperating requests. A person who takes the oath that he would not harm anyone, surely needs no sword or gun. To a question, who is a true Musalman, the Prophet replied, 'One who does not hurt another Musalman by speech or action.' We shall have to ask ourselves how we have used our tongue and hands. Many among us perform *namaz* and recite the Koran but hurt others with our words and deeds. How can we then claim to be Musalmans? It is not so easy to be a true Musalman. That is why I am giving you time to prepare. I have noticed that the majority of the people do not realize their responsibility. I want sincere workers who would regularly and ably perform the task assigned to them. They will be trained, taught to read and write Pakhtu, and made conversant with the life and teachings of the Prophet and with the world events and history.

"Whatever trouble we face now is due to faulty working of government machinery. Many people tell me that the Government servants are with the Muslim League, but I assert that it is not so. They are not interested in Islam. They have nothing to do with the League. They are self-centred. Without tagging themselves with the Muslim League, how can they impress you?

"Perhaps, you know that the police, the Khans and the feudal lords do not enjoy the prestige they once did. The divines are no more looked upon with awe and reverence. They know what Khudai Khidmatgar movement aims at. They are worried about their position, knowing that their days are numbered. God willing, if we can form a group of sincere workers, we will soon succeed in reaching our objective.

"An individual cannot hope to do any work all alone unless selfless men of character join hands with him. I do not aspire to work only among the Pakhtuns of the Frontier Province but also among the tribal brethren. Our adversaries poison the people's minds by saying that the Hindu Raj has been established. I cannot counteract this propaganda by speech alone. I dwell on it in the *Pakhtun*. I request every home and village to subscribe to it and the Khudai Khidmatgars to read it out to them, if necessary. It is wrong to say that the Hindu Raj is established.

It is not a rule of Hindus but of the people of India. When the government was being formed, five seats were allotted to the Musalmans, and afterwards all these seats were reserved for the Muslim League. The Congress contended that the crores of Muslims not belonging to the Muslim League should also have their representatives, but the Britishers declined. And that made the Congress refuse to form the provisional government. The Muslim League was willing to benefit by availing of the opportunity of forming the provisional government but the Viceroy stood in the way. If the League had formed the government, its content would have been the same as today. Would it then be not a Hindu Raj? When the government is formed by the Congress, it is labelled as Hindu Raj. In fact it is a British propaganda. The Muslim League brethren are the sons of the soil and the Britishers are not their well-wishers. The door is still kept open for the Muslim Leaguers to enter the government. Let them come and form a Muslim Raj.

"I want to warn you not to be misled by false propaganda. Learn to distinguish a friend from a foe. The time is critical. The self-seekers are bound to create trouble and disturbance at this hour of transfer of power. If you get caught into the net of these self-seekers, you will ruin the community."

Addressing a mass meeting a week later, Abdul Ghaffar cautioned: 'Beware of the Muslim League propagandists and do not be duped by their mischievous slogans." The Muslim Leaguers were going round the country-side dinning that the Interim Government formed by Nehru was a purely Hindu Government. He pointed out that the composition of the present Interim Government was based on the formula to which the Muslim League was committed. He added: "The Frontier Muslim League's latest propaganda is that the bombing in Waziristan has been done under the orders of Nehru's Government. The truth is that the bombing was carried out in August when the Interim Government had not even been formed. When the news reached me I immediately took up the question and made a public protest, whereupon the operations ceased. The so-called torch-bearers of Islam, who are now profuse in their lip-sympathy for the tribesmen, did not raise even a finger to have the bombing stopped while it was on."

He said that the air raid in Waziristan had been employed as a new weapon to create a hostile atmosphere against a popular government at the Centre. Not only was mouth-to-mouth propaganda carried on, but handbills were issued to mislead the simple tribesmen into believing that the bombing was the result of the Congress coming into power. He alleged that the Political Agency had been favouring the Muslim League by allowing the Leaguers to enter the tribal territory and hold

meetings there, whereas the Khudai Khidmatgars were not permitted to enter that territory even to till their own lands. He demanded that there should no longer be any bar to contact the tribesmen as was the case in the past. Hinting that the question of tribal policy might have been one of the subjects dealt with in the sealed letter he received recently from Nehru, he said that the Congress at any rate should not permit the old outlook to continue in the External Affairs Ministry. "A dangerous situation is fast developing in the tribal areas that might thwart the dream of an independent India which is approaching reality today."

At the end of September a representative jirga was held in the tribal area, presided over by the Fakir of Ipi. The Fakir of Ipi praised Nehru for ordering the stopping of air-raids in Waziristan and tribal area. He said: "We have been engaged for long in a regular crusade to maintain our integrity and independence. We have no grudge against Hindus and Sikhs. Our conflict is with the Britishers. We are hopeful that with the shouldering of administrative responsibilities at the Centre by the Indian National Congress with Nehru at the helm, sincere efforts will be made to inculcate brotherly relations with the neighbouring tribes. I am sure that steps will be taken to improve their economic conditions and educational facilities will be given to remove their backwardness. Referring to the Muslim League's hostile propaganda in the name of tribal leaders, he said: "No self-respecting and patriotic soul who loves tribal territory and knows the real significance of Islam can have any truck with the British-sponsored Muslim League."

On October 7 Gandhi referred to the negotiations in progress between Nehru and Jinnah and expressed the hope that the Muslim League would join the Interim Government. He wanted the people to pray this time that the union between the Congress and Muslim League would be even deeper and more lasting than during the Khilafat days and that brother would no longer abuse or kill brother and would live in peace. But then they should remember that the actions of man were significant of the condition of his mind. The audience before him were a mere drop in the ocean of Indian humanity, but if everyone wanted to live at peace with his brother, then the Congress and the Muslim League had to come together. It was true that the Viceroy had to take orders from the British Cabinet in England, but all the same, he was an autocrat. Their tried leaders, however, were the people's men, who had to do the people's will. Once they ceased to quarrel and kill each other, they would be free and in an independent India there was much to be done. Today, they were foodless and naked; bribery, corruption and black-marketing were rife. All these must go and then they could get together and build the new order that they wanted in India.

In early October the Nawab of Bhopal met Gandhi and discussed with him a formula, the substance of which was that since the Muslim League had swept the polls at the recent general elections, so far as the Muslim seats were concerned, the Congress should recognize that the Muslim League alone had the right to represent the Muslims of India in general, provided that by the same token the League also did not question the right of the Congress to represent all others, including such Muslims as had thrown in their lot with the Congress, and to choose such representatives for the Government, as it might think proper from among them. The formula was finally drafted and Gandhi duly put his signature to it. The second part of the formula said: "It is understood that all the ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case."

Jinnah while agreeing to the first part remarked that so far as he was concerned, the second part would require further discussion. Gandhi told the Nawab of Bhopal that his acceptance of the first part was conditional on Jinnah's agreeing to the formula as a whole.

On October 5 Nehru had a detailed talk with Jinnah at the Nawab of Bhopal's residence, and again on the 7th. But on the 7th Nehru was surprised to receive a letter from Jinnah which was not only at variance with the spirit and drift of the talk, but Jinnah had appended to it a copy of his nine-point demand which he had addressed to the Viceroy and which the Viceroy in his letter of the 4th October had also conceded in part. But, whereas the Congress was prepared to concede the substance of those points on the League agreeing to the second part of Gandhi's formula and coming to an agreement with the Congress, the Viceroy had conceded the same without any condition. Jinnah preferred to have the same at the hands of the Viceroy without coming to any agreement with Congress. On October 15 it was announced that the Muslim League had agreed to enter the Interim Government. On being informed by the Viceroy of the League's decision to come into the Interim Government, Nehru wrote to the Viceroy: "It is important for us to understand exactly how Mr. Jinnah proposes to join . . . the basis for participation in the cabinet must . . . be presumed to be the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's statement of 16th May." Jinnah's letter itself accepting the Viceroy's offer of five seats in the Interim Government was couched in terms of a general disapproval of the "basis and scheme of setting up the Interim Government" and repudiation of "the decision already made". Four days later, Ghazanfar Ali Khan, one of the Muslim League nominees for the Interim Government delivered a speech before the students of Lahore declaring: "We are going into the

Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan."

Jawaharlal Nehru left Delhi for a tour of the Frontier Province on October 16 at the request of Abdul Ghaffar, to see things for himself. The Viceroy tried to dissuade Nehru from visiting the tribal area but when he realized that Nehru was adamant he left it to the Governor to do the needful. Sir Olaf Caroe, the Frontier Governor, spent three days in Delhi to persuade Nehru to abandon his tour of the tribal territory.

Nehru arrived in Peshawar by air in the noon of October 16 and drove to the Premier's house, where he was received by Abdul Ghaffar. Some five thousand Muslim League volunteers wearing green uniforms and carrying long lances, spears and staves, headed by Abdul Qaiyum who had recently resigned from the Congress, lined the road leading to the entrance of the aerodrome and shouted slogans. As Nehru emerged, slogans were raised against him and an attempt was made to attack his car. Dr. Khan Sahib was so worried that he took out a revolver and threatened to shoot. The crowds gave way. When Abdul Qaiyum was asked why after the Muslim League had joined the Government the Leaguers were staging this demonstration, he said: "There will be no peace in the Frontier even if there is peace elsewhere."

"This Frontier affair is one of the mysteries of the world," said Abdul Ghaffar at a press conference when he charged the Political Department with engineering the anti-Nehru demonstration during the day. "Even Pandit Nehru cannot see much under the circumstances. But as the head of the External Affairs he can see for himself the intrigues of the Political Department. All that you saw in the morning and anything else that you may see when Pandit Nehru goes into the tribal area and all that you have been hearing during the past few days, is engineered and manoeuvred by the Political Department. I am a straightforward Pathan and I will say frankly what I feel. The Political Department tried their utmost to prevent Pandit Nehru from undertaking the visit to the tribal area. They did not like Pandit Nehru going there. Besides the Political Department there are others, whom I do not wish to name, who too did not like Pandit Nehru visiting the heart of tribal territory; since Pandit Nehru has the audacity to flout their wishes, they wished to teach him a lesson."

Asked by a correspondent whether he knew that while the Government were keeping Pandit Nehru's tour programme a close secret, the Muslim League had full details regarding it, Minister Meher Chand Khanna intervened to say: " I, Minister for Information, had no knowledge of the tour programme, the provincial ministry have had nothing to do with the tribal area."

When asked why a rally of Khudai Khidmatgars was not arranged, Abdul Ghaffar said that Pandit Nehru was visiting the Frontier in his official capacity as Minister for the External Affairs and, therefore, the Agent to the Governor-General was responsible for making arrangement for his reception. He left the official agencies free to organize the sort of reception they wanted to give him. He then added: "I am responsible for his programme of October 21, when I shall take him from Peshawar to Sardaryab. I invite you all to see the reception we Pathans give him then."

Commenting on the working of the dual system of the Government in the Frontier under which the Governor also acts as the Agent to the Governor-General in the administration of the tribal areas and every Deputy-Commissioner under the Political Department over which the popular ministry has no control, Abdul Ghaffar said: "Peace not only in the tribal areas but even in the Settled Districts can hardly be established so long as this vicious system lasts. Even Dr. Khan Sahib, the Prime Minister of the Frontier Province, cannot enter the tribal area without the previous permission of the Political Department."

Abdul Ghaffar was asked whether he would be in favour of bringing the tribal area under an Indian Government. "I am non-violent," he replied. "I do not at all want that the tribesmen by force be brought within our fold. I would leave the choice entirely to the tribesmen. While they would be most welcome to be with us if they so wish, we will help them even if they wished to remain apart. The tribesmen are the kith and kin of the Frontier people and should be won over by love and not by force. They must have a new deal. We have been fighting for our freedom. How can any Congressman even dream of curtailing freedom our brothers are enjoying?"

"We shall try not to be resentful at the Frontier policy of the Government of India," said Abdul Ghaffar, when asked how he would apply the policy of non-violence to the Frontier. He did not agree that in view of the past relations between the tribesmen and the British authorities, it would take a long time to win the tribes to a future of peaceful collaboration with India. He added: "As a first step, I want to organize primary schools, civil dispensaries, centres for training technical hands for cottage industries among tribesmen. Such activities can be enlarged and expanded when full control of the tribal area passes to the Indian hands. If the Political Department honestly co-operates with me in this humanitarian approach and if the Political Agents work with changed hearts, I can promise big results in five years' time. Love can succeed where bombs have failed. I admit that old wounds inflicted by British imperialism will take time to heal and we need time to remove doubts,

sullenness and misunderstanding. But I have faith in my non-violent approach. Instead of demoralizing by brute force I want to work for their economic prosperity and render them brotherly service."

When asked if the violent measures like bombardment would not be needed during transition stage, he said: "The British have painted the tribal people in black colours. You have only to mix with them to learn what lovable people they are. Then you won't think of brutal measures like bombardment."

"Why did not Mr. Jinnah come to an understanding with Pandit Nehru on the Interim Government issue instead of with the Viceroy?" asked Abdul Ghaffar and replied: "I have been proved to be correct because I said at Shabkadar recently that the team-work of the Congress Government was proving irksome to the Viceroy. The Viceroy must have thought to himself, 'who can save me now?' and turned to his old friends, Muslim Leaguers. What a tragedy it is that Mr. Jinnah could not settle with his Indian brothers but only with the Viceroy! Pandit Nehru would have been under an obligation to Mr. Jinnah if he would have entered the Interim Government by agreement with the Congress instead of acting as a tool of the Viceroy." He regretted that there was so much loss of life and property in the various parts of the country over only one seat in the Interim Government.

Pandit Nehru accompanied by Dr. Khan Sahib, Abdul Ghaffar and Mr.Creighton, Secretary to the External Affairs Ministry, flew to Miranshah, North Waziristan, on October 17. This was the first time that Abdul Ghaffar was crossing into Waziristan and exclaimed that this was the happiest moment of his life.

The first stage of Nehru's tribal tour began with a meeting with the Waziri tribesmen, which was also attended by Dr. Khan Sahib and Abdul Ghaffar. After Dr. Khan Sahib had introduced Jawaharlal Nehru to the tribesmen, their representatives asked about Nehru's mission to Waziristan. Some shouted, "We don't want Hindu Raj." They made it clear that the Waziris would not tolerate any interference with their independence. They recognized neither the Congress nor the Muslim League and they wanted to be left alone to lead their own lives as they thought best.

Abdul Ghaffar pointed out that they did not enjoy the real freedom. "We want to help you in achieving complete independence. We are keen to establish friendly relations with you. We want to help you in your difficulties and make you our friends."

Two hostile demonstrations in one day from the tribal jirgas held at Miranshah and Razmak brought from Pandit Nehru the remark that these were poor representatives of the people of the Frontier. Dr. Khan

Sahib asserted that the jirgas were hand-picked by the Political Department. After heatedly dismissing about one hundred headmen, Nehru turned to the Political Department representatives and said: "Are these petty pensioners you are afraid of? I cannot understand it." He told the jirga, "Mine is mission of love and I have no desire to rule over you." Replying to tribesmen who intervened saying, "We are free people and don't want to lose our sovereignty," Nehru remarked: "I am amazed how you people who get government money and act as they like, talk of freedom. We are struggling for India's freedom. We want you also to be completely free of foreign rule."

Nehru's tour was full of hurdles, all raised by the Political Agency. Abdul Ghaffar has given its graphic account thus:

"We first visited Waziristan where all the Political Agency officials were Britishers, suave but cunning. In Miranshah, Pandit Nehru asked the Political Agent and the Resident, what concrete results have accrued from spending crores of rupees in this tribal territory. They gave no reply. I intervened to say that they have done a lot for the Pakhtuns. That pleased the officials.

"I continued: 'They have succeeded in demoralizing and habituating the tribesmen to bribes to such an extent that for money they will readily throw community, country and Islam to the winds.' This remark greatly enraged the officials. When we sat for the meals, a young Political Agent of Wana asked, 'Have we done nothing for this area?' I said, 'You have done nothing, tell me what you have done.'

"From there we went to Tank by aeroplane, and then to Jandola, where the Political Agent was a Hindu. Here the tribesmen received us warmly and brought sheep to present us. Throughout our talks with them, they supported us. From there we returned to Peshawar and the next day reached the Khyber, where the Political Agent was a Muslim. When we reached Jamrud, Afridis, sitting a little away from the road, waved shoes at us. After taking tea at Torkhan we reached Landi Kotal where the people seated on the road began to throw stones at us. The Political Agent's car going ahead of us halted at once and the guards accompanying him fired at the crowd. The crowd dispersed. The glass screens of our car were broken but none among us was hurt excepting an English companion who had got down to take photographs.

"The next day we were to tour the Malakand area. We learnt that Sheikh Mehbub Ali, the Political Agent, a dangerous and unprincipled man, had visited Peshawar to confer with the Governor. With this background in mind I asked Pandit Nehru whether he still wanted to visit Malakand. He said that he should stick to the itinerary. The soldiers had accompanied us to Waziristan, but the police were with us in the

Khyber Agency. I told Dr. Khan Sahib that the soldiers should escort us to Malakand. If he was unable to do it, I would make arrangement through the Khudai Khidmatgars. In no case, I told him, he should agree to have only the police escort. Dr. Khan Sahib assured me that he would arrange to get the soldiers there. When we reached Risalpur I noticed that only the policemen were present. I was greatly annoyed and thought that I should not accompany the party to Malakand. Then again I said to myself that Jawaharlal was there because of me and I should accompany him. We reached Malakand before the scheduled time and none was there to receive us. While we were having tea inside the fort, we heard some shouting and we came to know that the Sheikh's men were there at the appointed hour but a little late because we had arrived before the scheduled time. We had Khudai Khidmatgars in the Agency too and their leader, Rahat Khan, came to alert me at night that the Sheikh had collected a lot of *goondas* and we should take necessary precaution. We spent the night at Malakand. The Sheikh was all along trying to please Dr. Khan Sahib, who could not resist flattery. In the morning when we were about to start, a Khudai Khidmatgar came to warn me that a big gathering of people on the road were kept ready to thwart us and we must be on our guard. I took aside Dr. Khan Sahib and conveyed to him the information. The Sheikh who was watching us from a distance approached Dr. Khan Sahib, who revealed to him everything I had told him. The Sheikh said: 'Are you not like a father to me? Am I not a Pathan? Can I be so treacherous as to deceive you?' Dr. Khan Sahib, depending on the Sheikh's word, started without waiting even for the police guards, with the Sheikh in the front and we all following him. Some Britishers were waiting for Jawaharlal at the gate of the fort to see him off. The Sheikh slipped out, and as soon as we stepped out of the fort and were at some distance from the Britishers, the crowd awaiting hurled stones at us. They blocked the road with a truck. A stone hit me hard on the back and I felt dazed. A jamadar occupying the front seat of the car ducked down. Dr. Khan Sahib snatched the jamadar's revolver and pointing it at the crowd shouted, "Move off, otherwise I shall shoot." The crowd immediately dispersed. Dr. Khan Sahib similarly ordered the truck driver to clear the road, and he drove away. Thus, we were saved. We were attacked at the gate before the eyes of the Britishers who made no effort to protect us. In our party were the Prime Minister of the province and the head of the External Affairs Ministry in whose charge was the entire tribal area. We were all wounded and the glass screen of the car was broken.

"Before resuming our journey, I told Dr. Khan Sahib that our car should be placed between two trucks. If a crowd is spotted by the road-

side, the pilot truck should stop, the guards should get down and order the crowd to disperse. If the people refuse to disperse, then they can charge them with lathis. And if that has no effect, the guards should fire from the truck following us. When we came down to Dargai from Malakand a big crowd waiting there began to shower stones at us. I pushed my hand to shield Jawaharlal from a stone aimed at him. Another man lifted an earthern pot filled with night-soil and threw it at us. It missed Jawaharlal and me but hit Dr. Khan Sahib and covered him with filth all over his body. With great difficulty we reached Peshawar and Dr. Khan Sahib was responsible for all this trouble. We would have made adequate arrangements on our own had we been allowed to do so.

"The next day we had a meeting at our centre at Sardaryab. We took such precautions there that, in spite of being instigated by the Government, nobody dared to disturb the proceedings. We had told Dr. Khan Sahib that we were making our own arrangements and neither he nor his government need to exert themselves for our protection. When our arrangements were complete and I was seated with Jawaharlal I came to know that some Britishers had gone to Dr. Khan Sahib's residence and were bent upon sending troops to guard us. I requested Dr. Khan Sahib to send the British troops back. Dr. Khan Sahib said, 'That is all right, let them come also.' I was adamant and told the Britishers: 'When we needed your help, you made no arrangement for our protection. Today, we don't want you or your arrangement, please leave us and see that none of you follow us.' The Britishers instructed the Malakand tribesmen, the followers of Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif, to attack our party at the junction of the Mathura Road and the metalled road of Charsadda, fourteen miles from Sardaryab. The Muslim League was eager to create trouble but did not dare to do so. Khudai Khidmatgars in their uniforms lined both sides of the road all along the route from Peshawar to Sardaryab. The people of the surrounding villages who came to know about the Malakand incident had sympathy for us and they stood behind the unarmed Khudai Khidmatgars. The villagers declared that if there was any attack, they would meet violence with violence. Some Muslim League followers came to Sardaryab to create disturbance but they saw the armed villagers standing firmly behind the Khudai Khidmatgars and disappeared."

On Monday, October 21, 1946, at 4 p.m., a mammoth gathering of twenty-five thousand people was held at the centre. The people from different parts and leaders of the independent Mohmand tribes living adjacent to Sardaryab came to greet Nehru.

A welcome address on behalf of Khudai Khidmatgars to Jawaharlal Nehru, "the Vice-President of the Central Government of India", said:

"Respected leader—today we Pakhtuns through the Khudai Khidmatgars extend a hearty and sincere welcome to you. Valiant general, we all highly appreciate your sacrifices and your trials which you have undergone for attaining the freedom of the country and we think that your contribution to the political progress of the people and wresting authority from the Britishers is great. The Pakhtuns know that you do not differentiate between Hindus and Musalmans or other inhabitants of the country. Your way of dealing with the Hindu ruler of Kashmir on behalf of the aggrieved Musalman subjects is a proof that communalism can have no place in your thought, and that is why both the Hindus and Muslims hold you in high esteem.

"Leader of the nation, your love and concern for the countrymen in general and for the Pakhtun community in particular is as evident as the sunlight. You fully expressed this love even when the authority and the power did not vest in you. Now when you are in authority and power, the Pakhtuns expect to bask in your love grown deeper and stronger. The Pakhtuns, right from the beginning, have played a very important part in the Indian politics. The geographical position of their region entitled the Pakhtuns to be the gate-keepers and guards of India. Today you have come to our land as a man in authority and we cherish high expectations that you will give a thought to our geographically strategic position. It goes to your credit that the voice of the Pakhtuns and of the Indians mingled together. During the glorious year of 1930, you as the President of the Congress bore the crown of thorn on your head, and we under the leadership of Badshah Khan raised the cry of revolt against the Britishers at that time. As in the past, so at present too, we share the difficulties and distresses of India. Today your and our sacrifices have borne fruit. Some change has come over the country and the Pakhtuns along with the Indians are its co-sharers. But, our province has its special problems. Lakhs of our Pakhtun brothers live around our province. If our relation with them is strained, then it will undoubtedly affect India. For the maintenance of peace in India it is essential that we should maintain friendly relations with them. But, up till now, the way the Central Government had treated them, had created suspicion in them about it. So, these suspicions should be removed. The Central Government should keep in touch with the tribesmen through us and should deliver these Pakhtuns free from the autocracy of the Political Department, because it had, under the pretext of introducing reforms and maintaining peace, squandered lakhs of rupees collected from the poor people of India. You know how poor our province is, we even do not have any provision for enough drinking water. The living conditions of the tribal people are worse than ours. You too must be aware of these

conditions and have come over here leaving many pressing engagements. Taking advantage of this occasion we want to request you that before your departure from here, please get it clearly settled with our leader, Fakhr-e-Afghan, that if the Central Government draw any scheme for our progress, they will not ignore the welfare of these tribal brethren of ours. And for opening new avenues of life the Central Government should extend their help to them.

"In conclusion we again are extending a hearty welcome to you. We are your comrades in the freedom fight."

In reply, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"I thank you for your welcome address which was presented to me as the Vice-President of the Central Government. I have come here today as an old friend and comrade, and not as a representative of the state. That position comes and goes, but our tie of friendship is not transitory. I have come here after a lapse of six years, and during these six long years a great revolution has taken place. The war is over but not the worries of this world. We here think that our fifty-year old struggle is over and the national government is established, but along with it thousand-fold difficulties and problems have confronted us. And yet we should not lose heart. Our responsibilities have grown in volume with our acquisition of power. Ours is a glorious country. After years of sorrow and sacrifices and struggle, we are the masters of our land. We are now strong and we hold our head high, but all sorts of misunderstandings are being created among us. Some people are trying to destroy our homes, taking advantage of our ignorance. I again want to stress, as I had done previously, that when we shall attain complete independence, it will bring welfare for all men and women of India and not for a particular group or party. You yourselves have made a mention of free tribal people and I admit that this tour of mine was undertaken to a large extent for their sake. This is the fifth day of my tour in these territories. During that period I have gained sufficient experience, some good and some bad.

"Many resented my coming over here. But I feel happy that I have come here. I came here with a message of love and brotherhood. Some have created trouble and disturbance, which neither you nor we could avert. Our people were not allowed to make our own arrangement and the arrangement provided with was so inadequate that some disorder crept in everywhere. The truth behind it all is that in this country there are some groups which foment hatred and dissension among us. In our struggle for freedom of India you and we marched together, shed our blood for the sake of our nation, and had created such an atmosphere of love and affection and brotherhood in our country that we cherished

the hope that the foundation of progress and prosperity of our country would be cemented with love. We fought with the government but the personal safety of the Britishers was not in danger. They freely moved about the lanes, streets and bazars untouched. Our leaders taught us to fight the enemy with bravery and chivalry that befits the dignity of an Indian. Please remember, no gain is reaped by any party or group by such unruly actions which lead only to disorder that does not help one to advance but to recede back. The other motive behind this foul play was, perhaps, to frighten us by these disorderly acts. But it is evident that those who have thrown a challenge to the tyrannical and oppresive British Government will not be intimidated by such acts. These incidents should open your eyes and rouse you from your slumber. You thought that now the country is free and that your responsibilities are over, but these incidents indicated something else and remind us that our battle has not yet ended and the seed of dissension and hatred sown today will prove disastrous and bring ruination. The wound caused by sword or rifle is quickly healed, but not so in the case of these incidents. And that is why all the great prophets have urged that all people should live together in love and affection like brothers. There are many people today in our country who are openly preaching strife and hatred. We proclaim the country belongs to us all and that we will enjoy its fruits together and no party or group will ride on the back of the others.

"You know the history of India. The British did not conquer India, but they took advantage of our dissensions and weaknesses. The same is the condition today. They are taking advantage of our ignorance, disunity and dissensions.

"All was well both for you and us. A few drops of blood of Badshah Khan and mine sprinkled on this holy land of yours will surely bear fruit. You must be broad-minded, because you claim to be the Khudai Khidmatgars. As you are tall and strong in body, so must be your heart and head. I want to convey through you to the tribesmen that I bear no grudge against them for all that has happened during these few days. The Khudai Khidmatgars were never permitted to enter the tribal area, but the mischief-mongers could go there to tell the people that the Hindu Raj is being established. But, whoever has spread this rumour has told untruth. I had gone there to study the situation. We were also held responsible for bombing Waziristan, which, in fact, took place a month before we were in office. When we came to know through Badshah Khan about this bombing, we stopped it. But then such false rumours have been spread amongst the tribesmen. These ill-informed, uneducated people have been deceived. They are brave people, and I indeed admire that quality.

"This is my first visit and I shall come again and again till the tribal wrangle is settled. I shall leave by tomorrow and cherish the memory of these incidents. I plead with you to do a difficult thing—not to be angry over these incidents. Anger is not good in itself but if it is transformed into strength then it will achieve great results. It is natural for you to resent any assault on Badshah Khan, a man of principle, and you should do so. But we should draw strength from righteous indignation, see our country prosper, and end the rule of tyranny.

"I take leave now, but the memory of this visit will abide. I again thank you for your welcome address."

Abdul Ghaffar in his concluding speech said:

"I did not intend to speak on this occasion, but I just want to alert you. I am a Pakhtun, used to plain-speaking. I must frankly tell you that Jawaharlal Nehru could not bare his heart open to you, because the responsibility of his position in the Government prevents him from speaking against the Government.

"Gandhiji too wanted to visit the Frontier Province in 1931, but the then Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, did not permit him to do so. Gandhiji then suggested the names of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel, but the Viceroy rejected the suggestion. Finally, he informed the Viceroy that come what may, Devadas would visit the Frontier Province. Devadas came here against the wishes of the Viceroy. On this very bridge over Sardaryab, the 'civilized' Government had sent a party of dacoits to kill us. With God's grace, we were saved. None can destroy one whom God protects.

"Jawaharlalji has told you that some people resented his coming over here. Like the Viceroy, our Governor too opposed his visit. As he defied them, a dirty trick was played on him to teach him a lesson. Those very people for whose benefit and progress he undertook this tour, were incited to throw stones at him. It is no good getting excited over them. The Britishers want to ruin us by sowing dissensions among the Pakhtuns. All that has happened in the Malakand Agency is the result of our complacency and our carelessness. Our lives were spared, because we were destined to live. They did their best to kill us but God willed otherwise and spared us to serve you. Britishers have spread a net for us, but we are not children not to see through their game. They want to foment internal quarrel among us. We should not get caught in their net. They ask us today to trust each other. Is it the way to honour that trust? Sheikh Mehbub Ali, the Political Agent of Malakand, visited Peshawar on the eve of our tour for consultation with the authorities, and whatever followed was done with the full consent of the Britishers who hatched the plot. So far we had put trust in them. We should now

make a decision on the firm policy to be followed henceforth. When, at Sardaryab, we made our own arrangements, the police and the military approached us to say that they want to take charge of the security measures. I bluntly told them that we did not need their help. We are not gullible like innocent children. When we needed their help, they failed us. When we needed their protection, they disappeared. After we were assaulted, they came on the scene. We can see through the game, we understand their strategy.

"I want you to remember that the Britishers do not want to be dethroned and want us to get exhausted by fighting with each other. We know who our enemies are and we know that we are passing through a critical time. We should not be caught napping but be fully prepared to fight the enemy who wants to destroy our religion, our country and our community."

Dark Clouds

1946–7

On his return from the Frontier tour, Jawaharlal Nehru again wrote to Lord Wavell, on October 23, 1946, reminding him about the basis on which the Congress had agreed to the Muslim League's entering the Interim Government. He replied: "I have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government is conditional on the acceptance of the scheme of May 16th . . . and that he must call his council at an early date to agree to this. As I have told you, Mr. Jinnah has assured me that the Muslim League will come into the Interim Government and Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating." Nehru wrote back: "While you have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah, it is not equally clear what the Muslim League's view is. This is all the more necessary because the Muslim League is not joining the Government after an agreement with the Congress."

In Calcutta, after the sudden Muslim League onslaught of the Direct Action Day, the Hindu population organized itself and hit back with equal fury. The cry thereafter went forth that Calcutta must be avenged and the blow should be struck where numerically the Muslims held the advantage. Noakhali district in East Bengal with a Muslim majority of eighty-five per cent, offered special facilities. The same day on which the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government was announced, news was received of the disturbances in Noakhali marked by an orgy of killing, abduction, rape, arson, loot, forced marriages and conversions by the Muslims. Civil authority had completely broken down and in many places the hooligans had the support of the administration. Thousands of refugees poured into the border districts of Bengal and Bihar, bringing with them harrowing tales of atrocities. It sent a wave of resentment all over India and set up a reaction of mob fury in Bihar. Then Bihar was avenged in Hazara in the Frontier Province, where the Hindus and Sikhs became special targets of Muslim fanaticism. The disturbances enveloped the U.P., the Punjab and Sind.

The Congress Working Committee met in Delhi on October 23 and adopted the following resolution on the happenings in East Bengal:

". . . The committee hold that this outburst of brutality is the direct result of the politics of hate and civil strife that the Muslim League has practised for years past and of the threats of violence that it has daily held out in the past months. The chief burden for permitting a civil

calamity of such proportions to befall the people of the province must rest on the provincial government . . .

"At the same time, the committee must sound a warning against retaliatory outbreaks of communal violence. Nationalism and communalism are in a final death grip. The riots in East Bengal clearly form parts of a pattern of political sabotage calculated to destroy Indian nationalism and check the advance of the country towards democratic freedom. Therefore, the committee cannot lay too much emphasis on the warning that communalism can only be fought with nationalism and not with counter-communalism, which can end in perpetuating foreign rule."

Ever since Gandhi had heard of the happenings in Noakhali, he had been furiously thinking as to what his own duty was and pouring out his anguish in a series of prayer speeches. He decided to disengage himself from all other activities to go to Noakhali and stay there as long as necessary. This was his "do or die" mission. He would return only when the victims had developed courage and the oppressors a feeling of repentance, so that the two communities could live together. Speaking at the prayer meeting on October 27, he said that he was leaving for Calcutta the next morning. He was going to Bengal not to pass judgement on any body. He was going there as a servant of the people and would meet the Hindus and the Muslims alike. Some Muslims looked upon him as an enemy today, but he did not mind their anger. Were not his co-religionists angry with him at times? From the age of seventeen he had learnt the lesson that all mankind, be they of any nationality, colour or country, were his own kith and kin. If they were God's servants, they had to become servants of all His creation.

While Gandhi was in Calcutta, four ministers of the Interim Government—Nehru, Patel, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar, rushed to the city to help further the peace efforts. Suddenly communal fury broke out in Bihar and they proceeded to Patna from Calcutta. On November 6, Gandhi appealed to Bihar: "If the misconduct in Bihar continues, all the Hindus in India will be condemned by the world. The misdeeds of Bihari Hindus may justify Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's taunt that the Congress is a Hindu organization in spite of its boast that it has in its ranks a few Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. Bihari Hindus are in honour bound to regard the minority Muslims as their brethren, requiring protection equal with the vast majority of Hindus. Let not Bihar which has done so much to raise the prestige of the Congress, be the first to dig its grave . . ."

On November 5, Rajendra Prasad anounced that Gandhi had resolved to undertake a fast unto death if the communal riots did not stop in Bihar within twenty-four hours. Soon there was quiet.

On November 20, Gandhi broke his camp at Kazirkhil in Noakhali to face the dark unknown. Speaking after the prayer at Srirampur, he stated that he had come here with two companions only. The other companions had been left behind at Kazirkhil, and each of them was likewise to choose one village for himself. His idea was that each Hindu worker thus sent should be accompanied by a single Muslim worker, and both of them together would mix with local people and gradually create the atmosphere when the refugees from here shed their fear and would be able to come back and live in peace and friendship. Fear is a thing which he disliked. Why should we be afraid of another man? Man should stand in fear of God alone, then he can shed all other fears.

Abdul Ghaffar emulated Gandhi in trying to preserve peace in the Frontier Province. Abdul Qaiyum, who recently had left the Congress to join the Muslim League, stated: "Ever since his return from the Congress session at Meerut in November 1946 Abdul Ghaffar Khan has redoubled his anti-Muslim activities. His decision to send a peace deputation to the tribal area is a danger-signal to Muslim India. The object is to mislead the simple-minded tribesmen with a view to prevent them from rendering assistance to Indian Muslims in times of need. The hostile mass demonstrations against Nehru should have convinced him that the Pathan is wide awake and will have nothing to do with Akhand Hindustan. The Frontier Muslim League will take necessary steps to defeat his sinister move."

Jinnah sent out a directive that "no representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly." The Congress held 211 seats in a house of 296. Abdul Ghaffar and Maulana Azad were elected by the Frontier legislature for the Constituent Assembly. The Constituent Assembly met in Delhi on December 9, 1946 and elected Babu Rajendra Prasad as its chairman. Congratulating Rajendra Prasad on behalf of the Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"People who happen to live together in prison and other places of pain and sorrow, get good opportunity to know each other. I am proud that I have lived a long time in prison with Babu Rajendra Prasad. I know him well and I can say that the greatest quality he possesses and every Indian should possess is that his mind is free from communal bias. Unfortunately, people in India have different prejudices. You all know of Hindu food and Muslim food. Babu Rajendra Prasad is free from all such prejudices.

"I feel with great sorrow the absence from this house of our Muslim League brethren. I regret to say that my Muslim brethren are displeased with the people of the North-West Frontier Province and especially with me. They say that I am not with them. Many a time while travelling in

train I have to hear such things. I tell them that I am always with the Muslims, never separate myself for one moment from them. However, I am not with the Muslim League. It is a political party and it is not necessary that one should be with it. Every man is free to have his own opinion. Everybody has a right to do what he honestly considers good for his country and his people. Nobody has got the right to ask me why I am with the Congress. I admit that the people of the North-West Frontier Province are much behind you in literacy and in wealth. Our province is a small one, while yours are larger, but I can say that the people of the Frontier are in no way behind you in many things.

"When we read the history of India prior to the advent of the British and compare it with the conditions prevalent now, I find the villagers of this once prosperous India steeped in poverty and want. One thing which causes me great sorrow is that whenever we try to do something for the welfare of our countrymen, impediments are placed in our way. And this has caused disappointment to the people of the North-West Frontier Province and they feel utterly helpless. We have been forced to think that we can do nothing for the good of this unfortunate country until we make it free. I desire to tell my Indian brethren why we are with Mahatma Gandhi. We believe that the Congress is trying to free this country and ameliorate the lot of the people. And we are with the Congress because we are tired of slavery. It is true that we are behind you in education, but in the non-violent campaign of 1942 only our province fought non-violently. We possess more weapons of violence than any other part of India and yet we adopted non-violent methods. Why? I tell you that whether we are Hindus or Muslims we can win the people only by being non-violent, because violence breeds hate and and non-violence generates love. You cannot bring peace to the world by violence. I am glad Babu Rajendra Prasad believes in non-violence, and I am sure that if he guides this assembly to tread the path of non-violence, he will guide it to success."

The quiet and semi-deserted village of Srirampur in East Bengal was transformed almost overnight when Nehru accompanied by Kripalani arrived there in the last week of December. Both Hindus and Muslims from the surrounding villages besieged the place. It was nearly two months that Gandhi had been away from Delhi. Things had not been moving smoothly at the Centre since his departure from Delhi. A crisis seemed imminent. The Constituent Assembly had met and adjourned after a general discussion of "Objectives Resolution" in order to give an opportunity for the Muslim League to come in. But the Muslim League had not reversed its previous decision to boycott it, and Lord Wavell who had brought the League into the Interim Government on

the basis of an oral assurance that Muslim League was coming into the Interim Government with the intention of co-operating, kept enigmatically silent when Jinnah repudiated having given any such assurance. The dead-lock between the Cabinet Mission and the Congress over the interpretation of the clauses relating to grouping of the provinces continued unsolved. The British Government's decision of 6th December raised a serious issue for Assam and the North-West Frontier Province.

Nehru explained to Gandhi how the rift between the Congress and the Muslim League had been widening since his departure from Delhi; how the League had managed to put off till the ensuing budget session the announcement about the abolition of the salt tax which had been decided upon before the League came into the Interim Government; how these tactics had brought about a condition nearing a stalemate in the Cabinet and led the Congress members to give Lord Wavell a notice of resignation; how Lord Wavell, on the other hand, was using the stalemate as an argument for making further concessions to the Muslim League and for asking the Congress to form coalition Governments even in the provinces.

"It should not be forgotten," Gandhi said, "that however powerful the Congress has become, the Constituent Assembly as contemplated today can only meet by action of the British Government." Even if the Constituent Assembly met with the willing co-operation of the British Government in the teeth of the Muslim League's boycott, he argued, it would be meeting under the "visible or invisible" protection of the British forces whether Indian or European. "In my opinion, we shall never reach a satisfactory constitution in these circumstances." His suggestions for the guidance of the Congress Working Committee were:

"1. It is now, perhaps, too late to cry off the Constituent Assembly, though I hold it still to be the best course to make the Congress position absolutely clear.

"2. The second best is to accept the Cabinet Mission's statement with the joint interpretation of it between themselves and Jinnah.

"3. It must be clearly understood that it is open to any Congress individual or unit to declare his or group's or province's secession from the Congress stand, which the Congress should be free to accept whilst still openly guiding the seceding element. This will be in accordance with the Cabinet's position that they will not compel any group or any province. The result of this will be that the members of Section A will prepare a full constitution in terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement and B and C Sections would have to frame what they can in spite of the seceders as at present conceived—Assam in the east and the Frontier in the west, the Sikhs in the Punjab and may be Baluchistan.

"It may be that the British Government will recognize or set up another constituent assembly. If they do, they will damn themselves for ever. They are bound when a constitution is framed in terms of the Cabinet Mission's stand to leave the rest to fate, every vestige of British authority being wiped out and the British soldiers retiring from India never to return.

"This position of the Congress is in no way to be interpreted as playing completely in Jinnah's hands. And if he considers this to be what he meant, the Congress will be thanked by the world for giving Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah a universally acceptable and inoffensive formula for his Pakistan. The Congress dare not shirk the right thing because it completely coincides with his creed.

"The constitution will be for the whole of India. It will have to contain a specific clause in what way it will be open to the boycotters to avail themselves of the constitution."

This in brief was Gandhi's solution as it finally emerged from his talks with the Congress leaders and which was later embodied in the All-India Congress Committee's resolution of 6 January 1947. It was fully endorsed by Abdul Ghaffar.

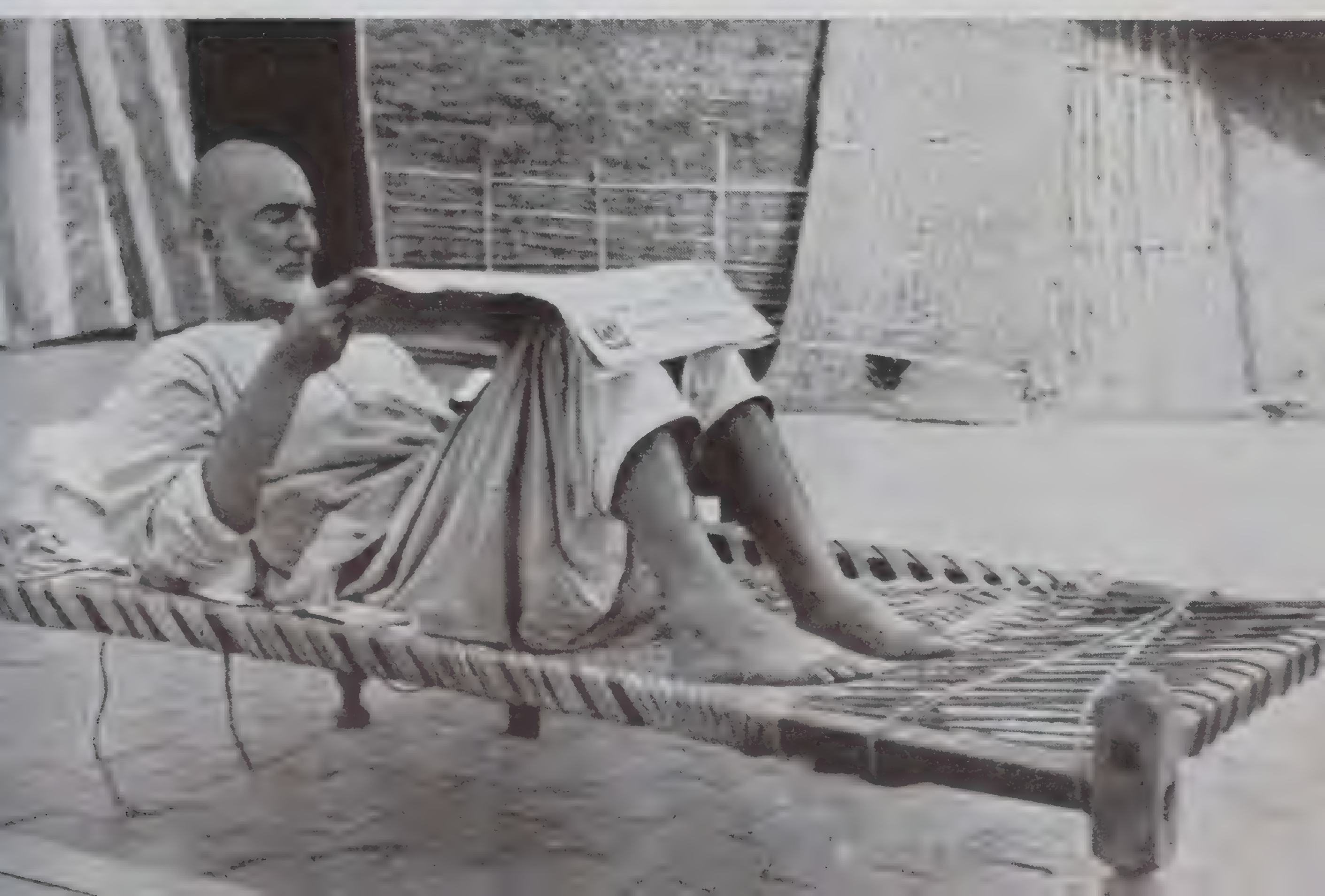
Nehru's plea with Gandhi to return to Delhi did not succeed. He told Nehru: "Come again when you wish, when in your opinion consultation is necessary. I claim to be a wise father to you, having no less love towards you than Motilalji. Do not depart from the spirit of the draft you showed me yesterday. Somehow or other I feel that my judgement about the communal problems and the political situation is true. My reason wholly supports my heart. I notice daily verification. So, I suggest frequent consultations with an old, tried servant of the nation."

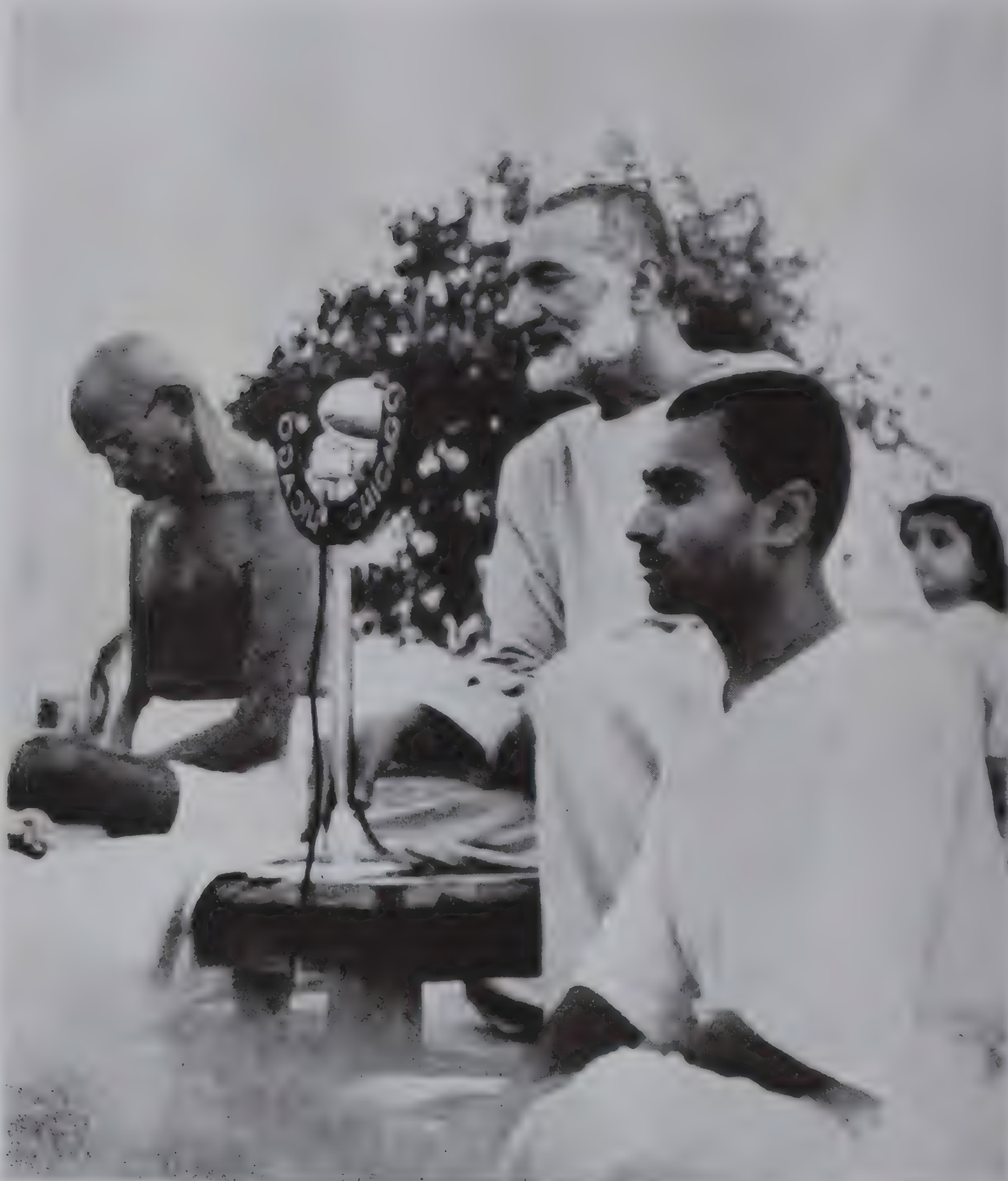
Important events had, in the meantime, taken place, affecting the whole country. The Karachi resolution of the Muslim League had put an end to any further hope of the Muslim League coming into the Constituent Assembly. On February 10, 1947, Nehru wrote to Gandhi: "We have informed the Viceroy that in view of the Muslim League resolution passed at Karachi, the League members cannot continue in the Government. He is awaiting instructions from London."

On February 20, 1947, Mr. Attlee made a statement in Parliament that it was His Majesty's Government's definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transfer of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948. Under the State Paper of 16th May, 1946, they had decided to recommend to Parliament for adoption a constitution that might be framed by the Constituent Assembly. But if a constitution in terms of the Cabinet Mission plan was not worked out by "a fully representative constituent assembly before that time,"



At the Khudai Khidmatgar camp, 1941





Government of India

At a prayer meeting, Delhi, 1947

Mr. Attlee went on to say that "His Majesty's Government will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on due date, whether as a whole to some form of Central Government for British India or in some areas to the existing provincial governments or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interest of the Indian people."

Simultaneously, Mr. Attlee announced the termination of Wavell's appointment as the "war-time" Viceroy and the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as his successor, entrusted with the task of transferring to Indian hands the responsibility for the government of British India. Giving his reaction to Attlee's statement, Gandhi wrote to Nehru:

"Evidently I had anticipated practically the whole of it. My interpretation of Mr. Attlee's speech is this:

"1. Independence will be recognized of those parts which desire it and will do without British protection;

"2. The British will remain where they are wanted;

"3. This may lead to Pakistan for those provinces or portions which may want it. No one will be forced one way or the other. The Congress provinces, if they are wise, will get what they want;

"4. Much will depend upon what the Constituent Assembly will do and what you as an Interim Government are able to do;

"5. If the British Government are and are able to remain sincere the declaration is good. Otherwise it is dangerous."

Nehru wrote to Gandhi: "Mr. Attlee's statement contains much that is indefinite and likely to give trouble. But I am convinced . . . it meets our oft-repeated demand for quitting India. The Working Committee is meeting on the 5th March. Your advice at this critical moment would help us greatly."

"I leave for Bihar today," wrote Gandhi to Patel on March 3. "You stalwarts are all there and working. In these parts I am something of a leader in the absence of others. So let me be here. I may not be able to prove it to you but I am convinced that my work here is of supreme importance."

Gandhi arrived in Patna on the morning of March 5. Babu Rajendra Prasad with the members of the Bihar Ministry met him at Dr. Syed Mahmud's residence as soon as he reached there. As Gandhi sat surrounded by some of his oldest co-workers, his head was bowed. They had done all they could and they would do all he might ask them to do. They were apolegetic: all was not well with Bihar. Rajendra Prasad told him genuine repentance was lacking. In Bihar, Bengal and the rest of India there was a belief that Bihar had "saved" Bengal. The meeting was suddenly broken. Gandhi needed rest.

In the afternoon the first to be ushered in were two workers whom Abdul Ghaffar had left behind at Patna. They gave a depressing report. Abdul Ghaffar himself was touring in the worst affected parts of Bihar and had reported to Gandhi that the Bihar Ministry were agreeable to everything he told them but the officers would not be able to cope with the problem. "People alone can do it." He further suggested that there should be a committee for the purpose but it should be non-political. Gandhi too thought likewise and sent a telegram to Abdul Ghaffar to join him in Patna.

In his first prayer discourse in Patna, Gandhi referred to the mission which had brought him to Bihar, the occasion being Dr. Syed Mahmud's letter sent through his private secretary. He had flattered himself with the belief that it would be not necessary for him to visit what he had affectionately described as "my Bihar" by right of service. But Dr. Mahmud's letter led him to think that all was not as well as it should be. It was, however, no use crying over spilt milk. He hoped that they had done or would do all reparation possible which must in its magnitude be as great as their crime, if their repentance was real. If they adopted an attitude of self-righteousness by putting it all on the *goonda* elements, for whom the Bihar Congressmen could not be held responsible, they would reduce the Congress to a miserable political party instead of being the one national organization which, by right of service, claimed to represent the whole of India including not only of the Congressmen or its sympathizers, but also its opponents. To make good that claim, the Congress must hold itself responsible for the misdeeds of all communities and classes. It was not true to say that no Congressmen were involved in the mad upheaval. That many Congressmen had staked their lives in order to save their Muslim brethren was no answer to the charge that was justly levelled at the Bihar Hindus by indignant and injured Muslims, who in their bitterness had not hesitated to describe Bihar as "without parallel in history".

That statement could be challenged, Gandhi continued. But he did not want to be guilty of weighing in the golden scales the comparative heinousness of crimes. He was grieved to find that there were thoughtless Hindus in all parts of India who falsely hugged the belief that Bihar had "halted" the mischief that the Muslims in Bengal had let loose. That way of thinking and acting was the way to perdition and slavery. It was cowardice to believe that barbarity such as India had of late witnessed could ever protect a people's culture, religion or freedom. He made bold to say wherever of late there had been such cruelty it had its origin in cowardice, and cowardice never redeemed an individual or a nation. The way to take reprisals, therefore, was not to copy the

barbarous deeds such as Noakhali had proved itself capable of, but to confront barbarism with manliness, which consisted in daring to do without a thought of retaliation, without compromising one's honour.

Gandhi was keen on knowing the whole truth. He met the ministers and the leaders of the Muslim League and the influential local Muslims and Hindus. Muslim sufferers came to him with their complaints. He told some of them to proceed to Noakhali to engage themselves there as he was engaging himself in Bihar. If anything untoward happened in Bihar while they were engaged in their work in Noakhali, he would pay it with his life.

Abdul Ghaffar was in the interior when Gandhi arrived in Patna. He wrote to Gandhi: "You are right. Our ahimsa is on test. When I see the politicians surrounding us wrongly using the name of God and religion to propagate hatred, I begin to hate politics." In the midst of insanity Abdul Ghaffar told the people in Bihar: "India today seems an inferno and my heart weeps to see our homes set on fire by ourselves. I find today darkness reigning over India and my eyes vainly turn from one direction to another to see light." In another meeting he stressed: "India is one single nation inhabited by Hindus and Muslims. There are provinces where Hindus are an insignificant minority. There are some other provinces where Muslims are similarly situated. If what has happened in Noakhali and Bihar is repeated in other places, the fate of the nation is surely sealed. The provincial governments under the popular ministers have not shown themselves to be strong enough to prevent major communal troubles from breaking out. May I remind the Muslim League that Islam is the most tolerant religion in the world. If we are to be true Muslims, we should do our utmost to spread toleration among our brethren. Today, the other communities are far more tolerant. We should rectify this fault to become true Muslims."

On March 12, Gandhi accompanied by Abdul Ghaffar commenced the tour of the villages and returned in the evenings to Patna. He took a nap during the car journey, resting his head on Miss Manu Gandhi's lap while his tired feet rested on the lap of Abdul Ghaffar, who gently massaged them. Addressing a prayer meeting in the evening, he referred to the decision of the British Government to quit India. If the British were going, as they surely were, what should be the duty of the Indians at the same time, he asked. What greater madness could there be than what had taken place in Bengal and Bihar or what was taking place in the Punjab or the Frontier Province? Should we forget our humanity and return a blow for a blow among ourselves, and thus perpetuate our slavery, only to tear up our motherland in the end into bits, which went by the name of Hindustan, Pakistan and so on? To every Hindu and

Musalman his advice was that if there was compulsion anywhere, they should gently but firmly refuse to submit to it. That required courage of a higher order than was needed in violent resistance. He then narrated the story of Abdul Ghaffar's conversion to non-violence. Badshah Khan came from a tribe whose tradition was to return a blow for a blow, there being cases where blood feud had been handed down from sire to son. Badshah Khan himself felt that such endless reprisals only served to perpetuate the slavery of the Pathans. When he took to non-violence he realized a kind of transformation coming over the Pathan tribes. It did not mean that every Pathan had undergone transformation or that Badshah Khan had reached the highest goal of non-violence. But he was every day nearing the goal, because he realized the truth of it. It was this type of non-violence which he wished the audience to imitate.

On March 16, Gandhi's weekly silence having begun, he requested Abdul Ghaffar to address the prayer meeting. In deep anguish, Abdul Ghaffar confessed that he found himself surrounded by darkness, which increased the more he thought of the future of India. He could see no light in spite of his best efforts. India was on fire. It was for the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians to realize that if India was burnt down, all of them would be the losers. He was a Khudai Khidmatgar. As such and as a true Muslim he could not hang back when a chance to serve others offered itself, and so he was in their midst. Their responsibility had greatly increased especially after the British declaration that they would quit India in fifteen months. They must remember that what could be achieved through love, could never be achieved through hatred or force. The example of Europe was before them as a grim warning. Addressing the Muslim Leaguers in general, he added that what he was saying to them was for their good only. They wanted Pakistan; they could have it only through love and willing consent. Pakistan established through force would prove a doubtful boon. He ended with an appeal to all communities to try to quench the fire which had engulfed India from Bengal to Bihar and again from Bihar to the Punjab and the Frontier. They should think in terms of the good of India and its inhabitants as a whole.

Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar held almost identical views on many a problem of the day and were attracted to each other intensely. Many of Gandhi's old colleagues argued with him as to what he should do but not Abdul Ghaffar. On one occasion referring to Gandhi's colleagues he said: "Mahatmaji, it amazes me, how crass very learned folk can be. They lack even a sense of proportion. Why cannot they see that Manu is like a six months' babe to you. I have the fullest faith in your purity. I might not in your place be able to do as you do, as I have not that

measure of self-confidence. But interminable discussions in which these good people are engaging you, seem to me to be utter nonsense, a sheer waste of time. Can't they see, you have made the impossible possible in so many things? You have broken new ground in so many fields which was beyond their ken and conception? If someone were to argue that because a thing was beyond his capacity, nobody should attempt it, I would say he is void of understanding, no matter how learned he is."

Abdul Ghaffar's reflections on the tragedy in Bengal and Bihar and his own contribution in mitigating it are as follows:

"The declaration of the Direct Action Day in Calcutta resulted in communal riots all over India. A few Hindus were killed in the Calcutta riots, but when the Hindus and Sikhs in revenge adopted the League's methods the Muslims suffered indescribable and irrepairable loss of life and property. To fan the flame the Muslim League, under the pretext of avenging Calcutta, let loose hell in Noakhali. These brutal acts made humanity hang its head in shame. The Hindus were caught in the net of British policy of 'divide and rule' and, under the same pretext of avenging Noakhali, they committed atrocities on the innocent Muslims of Bihar. The Muslim Leaguers' wish and prayer to God to usher in the day of expectation to grab power by unfair means and to divide the country was fulfilled. They set fire from one end of the land to the other and smeared their hands with blood and loot. The British bureaucracy gloated over the League vandalism. They wanted to paint the Indians as beasts, thirsting for each other's blood, and incapable of behaving as decent human beings. They wanted to convince the Labour Government that the Britishers should continue to rule over India, otherwise the Indians would meet their doom through fratricide. Aided by their patrons, the Muslim Leaguers took advantage of the situation to spread anarchy in the land.

"I was a witness to the ruination of the Muslims of the Patna district. The Muslim homes were looted, burnt and destroyed in many parts of Bihar. Many lives were lost, one hundred and fifty thousands made homeless, villages were devasted and deserted. A few stricken villagers who stayed on, were sheltered in the camps. The Mulsim Leaguers not yet appeased, wanted to turn these losses to their gain. They advised the stricken Muslims to migrate to Bengal. I wanted to rehabilitate them in their own homes. I approached the Muslim League leaders, staying in the stately mansion of Barrister Yunus and all the time busy sleeping or feasting. I told them that I wanted their help in saving the afflicted Muslim brethren from their misery as they had a surfeit of it. 'If you sincerely wish to rehabilitate them in Bengal,' I said, 'I won't stand in the way. But if you want to exploit them for your political ends, it is

surely improper. They are already in great distress. For God's sake, do not aggravate it.' Bereft of any feeling, they sent them to Bengal. They frustrated me in my effort to rebuild their houses and to rehabilitate them in their villages before the rains set in. The Leaguers were opposed to it because they were bent upon destruction rather than construction. The migrants lived in greater misery than those who stayed on. Some died on the way and some after reaching Bengal, and then they came to their senses and returned to Patna. They realized that the Muslim Leaguers had neither the power nor the inclination to do any good, but only were using them as their pawns.

"The afflicted Muslims wanted somebody to escort them to their village huts that concealed their buried valuables, but the scared Muslim Leaguers did not dare to leave the Patna city. I alone used to accompany the villagers and none were molested. After undergoing misery and troubles, the sufferers approached me to request the Bihar Government to rebuild their homes for getting them rehabilitated in their own villages. At my behest the Bihar Government promptly arranged for their rehabilitation. As the rains were approaching I thought that Gandhiji's presence in Bihar would expedite the work. On receipt of my letter he came and began the tour of the affected area. He gave them courage, strength and solace.

"Now came the turn of the Punjab and the N.-W. Frontier Province. At that time I was in Bihar doing relief work among the Muslims. The Frontier Assembly was in session. The communal riots were started in Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, Ambala, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala and the other places in the Punjab, and they fast approached Peshawar. The Muslim Leaguers attacked and abused Dr. Khan Sahib and agitated for his resignation. Innocent people were being slaughtered in the lanes and bazars of the Peshawar city. Communications were cut off and the city was isolated from the rest of India. To dislodge Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry, the Muslim Leaguers launched a violent campaign. During these disturbances the Khudai Khidmatgars had fully come up to my expectation and ten thousands of them, true to their pledge, rushed to the succour of their Hindu and Sikh brethren in distress and helped to protect their lives and property. Their attempts to remonstrate with the Muslim League were answered with demands for invocation of the Governor's rule in the province.

"I hope and trust that God will help us in the sacred mission and people will recognize that the essence of love, truth and non-violence is the hall-mark of every good, free and prosperous society."

A correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, London, reported from Peshawar: "*Agents provocateurs* from other provinces have been stirring

Muslim feelings here by displaying the photographs of skulls and torn fragments of the Koran from Bihar." Sardar Patel reported to Gandhi: "In Hazara district there are nine hundred thousand Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs combined make thirty-one thousand. Out of these, twenty thousand have already fled. The number of killed is from forty to fifty. There have been arson and loot on a wide scale. Bihar is being avenged in the Frontier . . . Badshah Khan has gone to Bihar, where nothing is happening. But he will do as he thinks fit. Dr. Khan Sahib, the good soul that he is, is in a predicament. The Muslim League is making poisonous propaganda."

The second wave of disturbances in the Frontier came in late February. In the month of January, a Sikh woman whose husband was murdered by the rioters was abducted and forcibly married to a Muslim. Dr. Khan Sahib ordered that the woman be restored to her relatives. The Muslim Leaguers thereupon organized a procession to demand that she be handed back to the person to whom she had been forcibly married. Abdul Qaiyum, the erstwhile Deputy-Leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislature, who had since joined the Muslim League party, defied the prohibitory order and was arrested. This was followed by a "civil disobedience" campaign against Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry as the "vindication of civil liberties". A number of Muslim Leaguers were arrested and sent to prison for the defiance of the law and incitement to communal violence. The League next organized a campaign to paralyse administration. Picketing of courts was resorted to, railway lines were blocked by unruly crowds. They tampered with the railway track and stoned the troops when ordered to disperse.

In Rawalpindi, disorders commenced in early March. There were killings, arson and looting. A little later a train was held up and the passengers attacked near Taxila. About the same time, trouble started in the city and cantonment of Peshawar. The Leaguers began to convert by force Hindus and Sikhs to Islam in the neighbouring villages.

The emergence in the Frontier Province of this ugly feature threw the non-Muslim population of Peshawar into panic. For ten days they shut up themselves in their homes. The budget session in the Frontier Assembly was then in progress. The Frontier ministry fearing that if they took drastic action to deal with the situation the Governor might use it as an excuse for dissolving the assembly, took no prompt action. As soon as the budget was passed, they met and decided to call in the Khudai Khidmatgars. Ten thousand Khudai Khidmatgars arrived in Peshawar the next day. Their presence helped to restore peace.

Then came the turn of Dera Ismail Khan, where over one thousand shops belonging to the non-Muslims were destroyed by a large Muslim

mob that invaded the city. The trouble spread in the villages. In some cases the entire non-Muslim population was killed or forcibly converted. The Frontier constabulary present in the city did practically nothing and allowed the mob to proceed with its orgy of lawlessness unchecked. But unlike the Punjab, in the Frontier Province the communal violence failed to undermine the solidarity of Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry.

Congress members in the Interim Government were greatly worried over the intrigues of the British officials and the continued obstructionism of the Muslim League. "We are drifting everywhere," wrote Nehru to Gandhi in February, "and sometimes I doubt if we are drifting in right direction. We live in a state of perpetual crisis and have no real grip of the situation."

Gandhi had been striving in Bihar to bring together the Hindus and Muslims, when by a stroke of irony he saw in the papers the Congress resolution demanding the partition of the Punjab. He had not been consulted or even forewarned. The resolution said: "The tragic events have demonstrated that there can be no settlement of the problem in the Punjab by violence and coercion, and that no arrangement based on coercion can last. Therefore, it is necessary to find a way out, which involves the least amount of compulsion. This would necessitate a division of the Punjab, in order that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part."

"I feel convinced and so did most of the members of the Working Committee that we must press for this division so that reality might be brought into the picture," wrote Nehru to Gandhi. "Indeed this is the only answer to partition as demanded by Jinnah."

"It is difficult to explain to you the resolution about the Punjab," wrote Sardar Patel to Gandhi. "The situation in the Punjab is far worse than in Bihar. The military has taken over control. As a result, on the surface things seem to have quietened down somewhat. But no one can say when there may be a burst-up again. If that happens, even Delhi will not remain unaffected."

Partition

1947

On March 22, 1947 Lord Mountbatten arrived in India to replace Lord Wavell. One of his first acts was to invite Gandhi to Delhi. Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar reached the capital on March 31. Replying to questions at the Asian Relations Conference on April 1, Gandhi said: "It is a great event that for the first time in our history such a conference takes place on the Indian soil. It will be a sorry thing if we go away from this conference without a fixed determination that Asia shall live, and live as free as every other western nation."

He then candidly told the distinguished delegates: "We do not know how to keep peace among ourselves. We think we must resort to the law of the jungle. It is not the experience I would like you to carry to your respective countries. I would instead like you to bury it here. India is on the eve of independence. We want to be our own masters. But how shall we be our own masters? I do not know; I am sure Pandit Nehru does not know; I am sure Badshah Khan does not know. All we know is that one should do one's duty and leave the results in the hands of God. Man is supposed to be the master of his own destiny, but it is only partly true. He can make his own destiny only in so far as he is allowed by the Great Power which overrides all our intentions, all our plans and carries out his own plans. I call that Power not by the name of Allah, Khuda or God, but Truth. The whole truth is embodied within the heart of that Great Power—Truth. You, gentlemen from the different parts of Asia, having come here and met together, carry away sweet memories of the meeting and make an effort to build that great edifice of truth."

It was a unique gathering of its kind. Almost all countries of Asia, including the Arab countries, Tibet, Mongolia and the countries of the South-East Asia as well as the Asian Republics of the Soviet Union were represented. Conspicuous by its absence was the Muslim League organization. It dubbed the conference as a "thinly disguised attempt on the part of the Hindu Congress to boost itself politically as the prospective leader of the Asian people", and regretted that "a number of organizations in the Muslim countries should have been beguiled to participate in this Asian Relations Conference."

Addressing the closing session of the conference on April 2, Gandhi asserted that wisdom had come to the West from the East. The first of these wise men was Zoroaster. He was followed by Buddha. Then came

Moses, Jesus and Mahomed, who belonged to the East. "What I want you to understand is the message of Asia", he said. "It is not to be learnt through western spectacles or by imitating the atom bomb. If you want to give a message to the West, it must be the message of love and the message of truth. The West is today pining for wisdom. It is despairing of the multiplication of the atom bombs, because the multiplication of atom bombs means utter destruction, not merely of the West but of the whole world. It is up to you to tell the world of its wickedness and sin. That is the heritage your teachers and my teachers have left us."

Gandhi believed, "If India falls, Asia dies." His prayer gatherings were disturbed by communalist Hindus taking objection to the recitation of the Koran. "Why don't you go and recite the Gita verses in a mosque?" they asked. "You are doing no good to Hinduism by your unreasoning fanaticism but only encompassing its ruin," he stressed. Here is Badshah Khan, a man of God every inch of him, if you want to see one in the flesh. Have you no respect even for him?"

Gandhi had a series of interviews with Lord Mountbatten, the first being on March 31. In his second interview on April 1, when he was accompanied by Abdul Ghaffar, Gandhi proposed to the Viceroy to call on Jinnah to take charge of the administration. Mountbatten asked, "What will Jinnah's reaction be?" Gandhi replied, "Jinnah will say, 'Ah, it is the wily Gandhi again.'" Mountbatten asked with a smile, "And won't he be right?" "No," said Gandhi, "I am being absolutely sincere." He warned Mountbatten that he had got to be firm and face the consequences of the sins of his predecessors. The British system of "divide and rule" had created a situation in which the only alternative was a continuation of British rule to keep law and order or an Indian blood-bath. The blood-bath must be faced and accepted.

The essence of the draft agreement proposed by Gandhi to Lord Mountbatten was that Jinnah should be given the option of forming the Government at the Centre, that the selection of the members should be left to Jinnah—they might be all Muslims or all non-Muslims, or they might be representatives of all classes and creeds. The Congress on its part would extend to it its full support in all measures that were in the interest of India as a whole. The sole judge would be Lord Mountbatten in his personal capacity. Provided this was done, Jinnah should be free to present his demand for Pakistan to the Constituent Assembly even before the transfer of power on condition that he won support for it by appeal to reason and not by the use of force or threats. Thus no province or part of a province should be forced to join Pakistan against its will. If Jinnah rejected this offer, the same offer to be made *mutatis mutandis* to the Indian National Congress.

The Viceroy told Gandhi that his proposal had "many attractions" for him. Under the impression that Lord Mountbatten was with him, Gandhi was confident that he would have no difficulty in getting Nehru and the Working Committee to endorse his proposal. But the Viceroy's advisers were resolutely opposed to have any formal agreement with Gandhi. The Viceroy, too, had begun to have second thoughts on the wisdom of giving his personal approval to Gandhi's plan before he had known how other parties would react to it. They all decided that Nehru should be informed, "before Gandhi began to work hard on Congress," that Mountbatten was far from being committed to the Gandhi plan.

Gandhi strove with the Congress Working Committee members for the acceptance of his plan he had outlined to the Viceroy. There was a heated discussion. Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar were strongly opposed to any partition under the British aegis. To Gandhi's mind, for the Congress to ask for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal by the British sounded like a counsel of despair. He was opposed to the whole logic of partition. The partition would solve none of their difficulties. On the contrary, it would accentuate those that were already there and create fresh ones. But he found that with the exception of Abdul Ghaffar, he was unable to carry any of the members of the Working Committee with him. Nor could they convert him to their view. Next day Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy to be omitted out of his consideration in further talks. On April 12, he took leave of the Congress colleagues to return to Bihar. The leaders were brusque towards him: "I have not met the Sardar for more than a few minutes. Sometimes I feel that perhaps I am the only one here in the whole company with spare time on hand."

A side-result of the talks with the Viceroy was the issuing, under the Viceroy's aegis, of an appeal over the signatures of Jinnah and Gandhi for communal peace. So far as his signature was concerned, Gandhi commented, it had no value, for he had never believed in violence. But it was significant that Jinnah had signed it. If the spirit of the appeal was adhered to by the signatories, they could hope that all trouble and bloodshed would stop.

Gandhi warned the Viceroy that unless "peace before Pakistan" was insisted upon, all the good that he might otherwise do would be turned to ashes. The Viceroy felt that a quick settlement between the Congress and the League over the main political issue was the best antidote to violence. By the middle of April, Lord Mountbatten was ready with the broad outline of his plan. He then called a conference of the Governors, as men on the spot, to give him their reactions to his plan: (1) Partition of India, if the Indian parties are agreed on it; (2) Provinces generally to have freedom to determine their own future; (3) Bengal and the

Punjab are to be nationally partitioned for voting purposes; (4) Sylhet district in Assam which had a Muslim majority, to be given the option of joining the Muslim province created by a partitioned Bengal; (5) The general elections to be held in the North-West Frontier Province to decide as to which part of India it wished to join.

Lord Mountbatten conferred with Sir Olaf Caroe, Dr. Khan Sahib and Pandit Nehru on April 18 in Delhi. They decided that as a step towards ending the disturbances all political prisoners in the Frontier Province would be released. On April 24 Jinnah announced that he had been informed of this decision by Lord Mountbatten and that he was convinced that the Viceroy would play fair with the Muslim League. Accordingly, Jinnah added his voice to those calling for peace in the Frontier—a fortnight later he "approved" of the decision of the Frontier Muslim League not to call off the movement. On April 27 Dr. Khan Sahib, back in Peshawar, ordered that political prisoners be released.

Meanwhile, Mountbatten had decided to visit the Frontier himself to see what was going on. He arrived in Peshawar on April 28. Mr. Alan Campbell-Johnson, Press Attache to the Viceroy, depicts the visit thus:

"On arrival at Government House, we found ourselves confronting a situation of crisis bordering on panic. Sir Olaf Caroe, the Governor, in a state of some agitation, advised us that there was an immense Muslim League demonstration less than one mile away, which was to place its grievance before the Viceroy and was ready to risk breaking the law by forming a procession and marching on Government House. The only alternative, according to Caroe, was for the Viceroy to forestall this plan by marching on them and showing himself to the multitude. The demonstrators were estimated as well over seventy thousand, and they had been gathering from the most remote parts of the province, many of them having been on the march for several days. Mountbatten had a brief 'council of war' with Caroe and the Premier, Dr. Khan Sahib, and it was agreed that the Viceroy should show himself without any delay. Mountbatten thereupon drove off to the demonstration, Lady Mountbatten, with great courage, insisting on going with him. The crowd confronting us was certainly formidable. There was much gesticulation and the waving of innumerable but illegal green flags with the white crescent of Pakistan, accompanied by a steady chanting of 'Pakistan *Zindabad*'. Within a few minutes of our arrival, however, the brooding tension lifted. The slogan changed: 'Mountbatten *Zindabad*.'"

After lunch Lord Mountbatten began a series of interviews, one with Dr. Khan Sahib and his Cabinet of four ministers, and the other with a deputation of local Hindu residents and Muslim League leaders, for whom a special dispension was made to leave jail in order to see him.

Lord Mountbatten met Dr. Khan Sahib and his colleagues in the presence of the Governor. The Viceroy began by saying that he appreciated Dr. Khan Sahib's public-spirited advice that he should go to meet the demonstrators. He had in fact done nothing but stand on an embankment. He had previously refused Jinnah permission to organize a procession to Government House. Dr. Khan Sahib, on his side, was at pains to confirm that he had called off a procession of Red Shirts.

The Viceroy observed that he had come to turn over India to the Indians, to transfer power in accordance with the will of the people. He was already devising machinery for dealing with the Punjab and Bengal, but, he added: "The Frontier position involves particular difficulty for me. I shall be telling the Muslim League that I will not yield to violence. I tell you privately that I think elections are necessary, but I can make no firm guarantee to the Muslims that there will be any. Mr. Jinnah's promise is that if there is any election, there will be no violence. You must trust my integrity. Jinnah accepts the position, and is asking his followers to call off civil disobedience." Mountbatten asked about the general control exercised by the Muslim League High Command. The reply was that the local Muslim League had run riot and taken charge. At the last election, the Muslim League had definitely been defeated on the Pakistan issue, and even Abdur Rab Nishtar, a Muslim League leader, was not returned.

When Dr. Khan Sahib turned to the question of Pathanistan, the discussion became explosive. If it were to prevail, it would create a new frontier cutting across the province's communal and political solidarity with Pakistan. "If you destroy the Pathan nation," warned Dr. Khan Sahib, "terrible things will happen."

Mountbatten went on to ask why there was no coalition government in the North-West Frontier Province. Dr. Khan Sahib replied heatedly: "If Congress want a coalition, I shall not remain in it. Our people are very poor. The Muslim League here represents only self-interest and a privileged class of Khans." Caroe pointed out, "There are some very wealthy Congress supporters as well."

Mountbatten inquired about the state of the communal feeling in the province. Caroe replied: "The Muslim masses are protecting Hindus and Sikhs, except, of course, in Hazara. The hearts and minds of the Muslims are sound." Dr. Khan Sahib alleged that Muslims had been allowed by the officials to break the law. Caroe replied that he knew of no single instance where officials were not trying to do their duty, but they were always blamed.

Following a discussion on constitutional procedure, with complaints from the Governor of unjustifiable executive pressure on the part of the

Prime Minister, and from the Prime Minister of the interference in the Government on the part of the Governor, Mountbatten intervened to say: "I am out here to do a job with no axe to grind. I want to transfer power in terms of the will of the people. Ideally I would have a plebiscite here, but there is no time." He then discussed the implications of partition generally and in relation to the North-West Frontier Province. "My problem," he added, "is whether to hold an election before we go or whether law and order are sufficient for the Government to hold on." He suggested a joint committee of High Commands to advise on elections. The British, he said, always carried the rap, but he reiterated that his mandate was impartiality.

No sooner was this meeting over, there was a session with local Hindu representatives.

Mountbatten said: "I am trying to get at facts. Do you support the Government?"

The deputation replied: "We are prepared to live at peace under any government."

Mountbatten observed: "I am glad of this sensible attitude. I am trying to act constitutionally."

There were complaints about the lack of police, who were stretched to the utmost. Four brigades were at hand, but there were murders in Peshawar and lack of any effective police action. Mountbatten stressed the danger of using soldiers in place of police. The two had different functions. He added that there were at this moment more troops in the Frontier Province than anywhere else in India, and Caroe added that more use was being made of them than at any time in his twenty-five years' experience, even including 1930-1. Mountbatten said that he was out to get the larger solution and end the uncertainty, but it would have to be a solution acceptable to all.

The third meeting was with the Muslim Leaguers, specially released from jail for the occasion. Among the delegation were the young and fanatical Pir of Manki Sharif and Abdul Qaiyum. They spoke at length and with utmost vehemence. Mountbatten gave instructions that they should all be lodged in one jail, so that they can meet and consult each other. He also agreed with their proposal that they should be allowed to go to Delhi on parole for consultation with Jinnah.

The Governor tried to persuade the Viceroy to promulgate Section 93 rule in the Frontier Province and thereafter order fresh elections. He even got a garbled report of the proceedings of a Cabinet meeting held during Mountbatten's visit sent to the Viceroy and refused to forward the note of his own Prime Minister embodying the corrected version, which had been sent over the Governor's head to the Delhi authorities.

On May 1, at the request of the Congress leaders, Gandhi again came to New Delhi from Patna. Lord Mountbatten was then ready with his plan, which he already had discussed with the Governors. The Working Committee was called to consider the Mountbatten plan.

Gandhi discussed the situation for over an hour with Nehru at the Bhangi Colony on May 1. He was firmly of the view that the Congress must not engage in the game of diplomacy with the British to score an advantage over the League. In no case should they barter India's unity for any concession at British hands but should instead demand that the British should play straight, strictly enforce the rule of law throughout the country pending the transfer of power, and refuse to have parleys with a party that was remiss in that respect or refused to co-operate; and if the British were unwilling, to get out of the game and bide their time till they would quit, leaving the Indian parties to settle it among themselves.

But the Congress High Command were afraid that if matters were allowed to drift, they would be overwhelmed by the forces of chaos and disruption which in the meantime were building up. Deaths from rioting were reported from Calcutta, Delhi, Lahore, Cawnpore, Amritsar, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan. Driven to desperation by the continued obstructionism of the Muslim League in the Interim Government, the deepening communalism in the services and spreading of anarchy, the Congress leaders were prepared to accept the Mountbatten plan of partition. The Congress High Command argument of the "lesser evil" did not appeal to Gandhi. He pointed out to them that Jinnah's declaration that the minorities in Pakistan would be fully protected was being honoured more in the breach than the observance. It was incumbent upon the British power to denounce the guilty party, but for that they were not ready, which made their bona fides suspect in his eyes. If the Congress accepted the logic of partition, it would ultimately lead to conflict and the disintegration of India.

The Working Committee met on the evening of May 1. Gandhi did not evince much interest in the meeting. The divergence between his point of view and that of the rest of the committee, he felt was so great that his participation in the discussions could not serve any useful purpose. But the members wanted him to be present and he agreed.

The operative part of the Working Committee's decision accepting the principle of partition was contained in the following letter from Nehru to the Viceroy: "In regard to the proposals which, I presume, Lord Ismay is carrying with him to London, our committee are prepared to accept the principle of partition based on self-determination applied to definitely ascertained areas. This involves the partition of

Bengal and the Punjab. As you know, we are passionately attached to the idea of a united India, but we have accepted the partition of India in order to avoid conflict and compulsion. In order to give effect to this partition, every effort should be made to meet the wishes and the interests of the people affected by it. Even before and apart from such partition, recent events have made administrative division of both Bengal and the Punjab an obvious and urgent necessity."

Nehru went on to observe: "Any proposal to put an end to a duly constituted provincial government having a large majority must not be considered and must be resisted." This referred obviously to the Frontier part of the plan. The plan had been discussed with the Congress leaders in general terms only, its text had not been shown to them.

On May 5 Gandhi and Jinnah were invited by Lord Mountbatten for successive interviews with him, and their visits overlapped. Taking advantage of their presence together, Mountbatten arranged a meeting between the two. As a sequel to it, Gandhi again met Jinnah at his residence next evening for about three hours. About the meeting Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy:

"We talked about the joint statement on non-violence. He was agreeably emphatic over his belief in non-violence. He has reiterated it in the press statement which was drafted by him.

"We did talk about Pakistan-cum-partition. I told him that my opposition to Pakistan persisted as before and suggested that in view of his declaration of faith in non-violence, he should try to convert his opponents by reasoning with them and not by show of force. He was, however, quite firm that the question of Pakistan was not open to discussion. Logically, for a believer in non-violence, nothing, not even the existence of God, could be outside its scope."

Abdul Ghaffar was feeling very sad and heavy at heart. He and his Khudai Khidmatgars had cast their lot with the Congress. And now it seemed as if they would no more belong to India. Nor, owing to their ideological differences with the Muslim League, would they have any place in Pakistan. "We shall be outcasts in the eyes of both," he sadly remarked. "But I do not worry so long as Mahatmaji is there." He was unwell but was disinclined to take any medicine. On the last day of Gandhi's stay in New Delhi, he had fever. But he insisted upon pressing Gandhi's limbs at night as before. Gandhi tried to dissuade him. He answered: "It is last day, so let me. It will make me well."

Abdul Ghaffar had kept awake till 10-30. When asked not to overstrain himself, he remarked: "Before long we shall become aliens in Hindustan. The end of our long fight will be to pass under the domination of Pakistan—away from Bapu, away from India, away from all of

you. Who knows what the future holds for us?" When Gandhi heard of this from Manu, he said: "Verily Badshah Khan is a fakir. Independence will come, but the brave Pathan will lose his. They are faced with a grim prospect. But Badshah is a man of God."

On May 7 Gandhi left for Calcutta. Abdul Ghaffar saw him off at the railway station. With a voice husky at parting, he said: "Mahatmaji, I am your soldier. Your word is law to me. I have full faith in you. I look for no other support." Gandhi often thought of him. He sent him Rs. 36,000 from Calcutta for constructing a school in Utmanzai.

The more Gandhi thought over it, the more he felt that a very wrong step was being taken for which in the end all the parties would have to pay heavily. He decided to make another effort to avert, if possible, the disaster. He addressed a personal letter to Lord Mountbatten, which he wrote on May 8 on the train to Patna:

"Whatever may be said to the contrary, it would be a blunder of first magnitude for the British to be party in any way whatsoever to the division of India. If it has to come, let it come after the British withdrawal, as a result of understanding between the parties or an armed conflict, which according to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah is taboo. Protection of minorities can be guaranteed by establishing a court of arbitration in the event of difference of opinion among contending parties . . .

"Referendum at this stage in the Frontier or any province for that matter is a dangerous thing in itself. You have to deal with the material that faces you. In any case nothing should or can be done over Dr. Khan Sahib's head as Premier. Note that this para is relevant only if division is at all to be countenanced.

"I feel sure that the partition of the Punjab and Bengal is wrong in every case and a needless irritant for the Muslim League. This as well as all innovation can come after the British withdrawal, not before, except always by mutual agreement . . .

"If you are not to leave a legacy of chaos behind, you have to make your choice and leave the Government of the whole of India, including the states, to one party. The Constituent Assembly has to provide for the governance even of that part of India which is not represented by the Muslim League . . ."

Abdul Ghaffar who passed through Lahore on May 8th, in a press interview, foreshadowed bloodshed in the Frontier Province in case the proposal to hold fresh elections was given effect to. Fresh elections were being proposed in bad faith. The motive behind the proposal was not to elicit public opinion on the issue of Pakistan, on which the Pathans gave a clear verdict a year ago, but to install the Muslim League into the ministerial throne by fair or foul means. He said that the Muslim

League agitation in the Frontier Province was primarily confined to the urban areas, where, too, it would have stopped by now but for the active support of the Governor. From all that he had seen and heard he doubted very much the sincerity of the British to leave India. If they were really sincere then their only motive in fomenting trouble in the Frontier could be to give a parting kick to the Khudai Khidmatgars and the overwhelming majority of the Pathans whom they wanted to punish for having played such a vital part in effecting their exit. In desiring fresh elections the British had only one motive—to reward their henchmen, the Muslim Leaguers, before leaving India, for their past services. He accused the Governor of doing things over the heads of the ministers. He disclosed that even the Muslim League leaders who were in jail and were now in Delhi, were released on parole without the previous knowledge of the Minister for Jails.

"The Zalme Pakhtun, which has recently been founded by my son, Ghani, in the Frontier, has no connection with Red Shirt movement," he stated. "It is quite a separate body. I still believe in non-violence, as it is my firm conviction that the country in general and the Frontier Province in particular should stick to non-violence. Violence spreads hatred, while non-violence spreads love."

Explaining the circumstances which led to the formation of the Zalme Pakhtun, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"The formation of the new party is the direct reaction on Pathans of the violent movement pursued by the Muslim League in the Frontier Province. During my three and a half months' absence from my province the people of the Frontier have been very much provoked as a result of violent and terrorist movement started by the Muslim League. Consequently, those who hitherto have been believers of non-violence are now drifting towards violence.

"On my return to the Frontier I collected my workers and told them that I am not prepared to give up my creed of non-violence. But if anyone of them believed in violence, he should openly declare it. Many of them were of the firm opinion that there must be an organization for the defence of non-violent people and they thought that in the present circumstances such a body is extremely essential. That is how Zalme Pakhtun came into being. The object of this party is to defend and not to offend. The Zalme Pakhtun volunteers believe in violence. They wear deep red uniforms and carry fire-arms."

During his stay in Bihar, Abdul Ghaffar had seriously thought of retiring from politics altogether. The pettiness and selfishness of power politics repelled him. But the recent developments in the Frontier persuaded him otherwise. To retire from public life at that stage, he felt,

would be tantamount to leaving the Pathans in the lurch in their most critical hour. "We are passing through critical times," he said addressing a gathering at Shabkadar in mid-May. "The Englishmen and their henchmen are worried over the prospect of losing power. Some people mislead you in the name of Islam. I feel it my duty to warn you against future dangers so that I may justify myself before man and God on the Day of Judgement."

Referring to the Governor, Sir Olaf Caroe, he remarked: "I have been in Delhi and I know from my intimate knowledge that the same person who meets you at the jirgas and claims to be your friend, has been submitting reports against you and urging the authorities at Delhi to keep in readiness strong squadrons of bombers to rain death and destruction on you. Ask him when he again comes to you at the jirgas, whether what I say is true or not. Let him face me if he denies it and I shall quote chapter and verse in support of my charge."

He recalled how recently Caroe had told his ministers to remember that there was nothing in common between them and India, and if they would agree to quit the Congress, he would give them all support.

"Why did Sir Olaf Caroe want a fresh election in the Frontier?" he asked. In the 1946 elections, which were fought on the specific issue of Pakistan, out of 50 seats the Congress had secured 32 seats, including 21 out of the 38 Muslim seats, all the Hindu seats and two out of three Sikh seats. Out of the 17 Muslim seats which their opponents had secured, 11 were from Hazara, which was a non-Pakhtu-speaking district. "Sir Olaf's intention is plain. He wants to hand over power to those lackeys and henchmen of his—Khans, Nawabs and some officers—who helped the British and opposed the Khudai Khidmatgars. At the time of the transfer of power, Governor Caroe is only too anxious to hand over power to those friends of the British. There can be no other meaning of a fresh election. For, it was only a year ago that the Pathans had given a clear verdict on the issue of Pakistan. It is dishonest to give a political status to communal movement of the Muslim League, whose followers have been indulging in crime."

The Governor's argument was that "the violent demonstrations in the province indicated lack of confidence in ministry." Abdul Ghaffar pointed out that the Governor could have helped to prevent the shedding of blood if he had done his duty. In 1930 a misguided Pathan had fired at a British officer, and the culprit was arrested, condemned and executed within forty-eight hours. When Miss Mollie Ellis was abducted and rescued, it was held by a leading Tory paper as an illustration of how the entire resources of the British Empire could be mobilized to retrieve the honour of a British woman. During the six years of war,

when the British themselves were in trouble, there was no trouble anywhere in the tribal territory. The British then wanted peace, and there was peace. And now hundreds of people had been butchered, thousands orphaned and rendered homeless while the British power in the Frontier looked on, unwilling to take drastic measures, which their ministers asked for, to put down lawlessness, and indeed, pointed to lawlessness as a reason for the removal of those ministers who had been returned to power by an overwhelming majority of the voters and who still commanded a majority in the legislature. "Caroe must feel ashamed that four hundred innocent citizens have been killed in the province and not a single culprit is arrested. What sort of administration it is!"

He made a passionate appeal to Muslim Leaguers to sit with Khudai Khidmatgars in a joint jirga to tackle various problems that are likely to crop up after the departure of the British from India. "We can patch up our differences today, if they meet us like brothers and renounce their violent methods. I shall agree to any honourable settlement between ourselves if an earnest effort is made." "The Leaguers," he said, "fear Hindu domination, while we fear British domination. Let us meet together and convince each other. We are prepared to allay their fears. But, I ask, will they in turn allay ours?"

Abdul Ghaffar continued: "Lord Mountbatten emphatically told me in an interview in New Delhi that he was going to be the last Viceroy of India and the Britishers were soon quitting India, and they would transfer power earlier than the time stipulated to seal friendship between India and Britain. 'How to trust you when I see your crooked dealings in the Frontier Province?' I asked. He held the Muslim League responsible for it. 'After all, what is Muslim League?' I asked. 'This is all Caroe's doing.' What gains Islam and the Muslims are going to reap from these riots and the slaughter of children, women and the aged? And how the Pakhtuns are going to be benefited by them? These happenings are against the tenets of the Holy Koran and the sayings of the Prophet. To lay hands on an innocent, poor man goes also against Pakhtun tradition. The other day an old Sikh pedlar was murdered on the road in spite of his willingness to embrace Islam. Is it done for the sake of Islam? I warn the League brethren that the means they have adopted will ruin them and the Muslim community. The fire they kindle will spread in wild blaze and consume everything in its way."

"It is a British conspiracy to compel the Hindus and Muslims to seek their protection and thus prolong their stay," he remarked. "The riot-stricken people sheltered in the Punjab camps and other places have already pleaded for it."

He appealed to Lord Mountbatten to act justly and impartially as

was expected of a just man like him. The Viceroy who has been sent to India to deliver the goods, should remain above party politics.

May 17, 1947 had been fixed by Lord Mountbatten as the date for the final consideration of his plan by the political parties concerned. But in the meantime the British Government had introduced some important changes in the draft plan that the Viceroy had in the first week of May sent with Lord Ismay to London. The proposal for the dismissal of Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry as a prelude to the holding of a re-election in the Frontier Province had leaked out and had provoked a strong reaction in the Congress leaders. They gave a warning that the whole Congress attitude towards the British Government's plan would change if there was any tampering with the Frontier ministry. On the top of it, London introduced some further modifications repugnant to the Congress. Nehru's reaction to these changes was so violent that Lord Mountbatten had to have the date for the proposed meeting changed to June 2, and the plan was re-drafted. One of the modifications introduced was that whereas under the first draft plan the provinces had the right generally to determine their future, that freedom was now taken away. Originally, for instance, the Frontier Province could opt, if it chose, for independent existence both outside India and Pakistan. The re-drafting sealed the fate of the Frontier Province outside the orbit of Pakistan, and that of a "Sovereign United Bengal," without an agreement between the Congress and the League, even if both Hindus and Muslims of Bengal desired it.

The Viceroy was summoned to London for further consultation. In his absence, Jinnah addressed a press conference in Delhi saying that the League would "fight every inch" to resist the partition of Bengal and the Punjab, the inference being that the two provinces should be included entirely in Pakistan. He then added the demand for a corridor across India to connect the separate limbs of the new state.

Lord Mountbatten returned to Delhi on May 31 with his final plan. Gandhi reached Delhi a few days earlier at the behest of the Congress leaders. The hardening of the Congress attitude against the partition plan as a result of Jinnah's new demands, provided Gandhi with another opportunity to persuade once more the Congress High Command as also the British Government, to revert to the Cabinet Mission plan as against Lord Mountbatten's partition plan. Gandhi returned to his slogan, "peace before partition". The Viceroy must refuse to have any parleys with the Muslim League before he had secured full implementation of the appeal to which Jinnah was co-signatory. No less committed was the Viceroy, and he was a man of honour. If the Congress did not weaken, the Muslim League would have to come to the Congress and

talk reason instead of presenting its mounting demand at the point of the pistol as it had been hitherto doing.

On the morning of May 31 Rajendra Prasad had a brief talk with Gandhi during his morning walk in anticipation of the Working Committee's meeting that afternoon. The Congress leaders cherished the belief that once partition was agreed to, peace would return to the land. Gandhi was emphatic that peace must precede partition; the partition before peace would be fatal. As things were developing, the minorities would not be able to live in Pakistan after partition. There would be mass migrations and chaos would follow.

The conversation was not yet finished when the walk ended. Abdul Ghaffar who was waiting for Gandhi, on seeing him, said: "Mahatmaji, so you will now regard us as Pakistanis. A terrible situation faces the Frontier Province and Baluchistan. We do not know what to do."

Gandhi said: "Non-violence knows no despair. It is the hour of test for you and the Khudai Khidmatgars. You can declare that Pakistan is unacceptable to you, and brave the worst. What fear can there be for those who are pledged to do or die? It is my intention to go to the Frontier as soon as circumstances permit. I shall not take out a passport because I do not believe in division. And if as a result somebody kills me, I shall be glad to be so killed. If Pakistan comes into being, my place will be in Pakistan."

Abdul Ghaffar said: "I understand. I won't take any more of your time." As Abdul Ghaffar left the room, Gandhi sent a word to him to take rest in the quiet of his room. "He is so punctilious, he will think that it will disturb my rest if he comes and stays with me."

On the following morning, the 1st June, Gandhi woke up earlier than usual. As there was still half an hour before prayer, he remained lying in bed and began to muse in a low voice: "Today I find myself all alone. Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal think that my reading is wrong and peace is sure to return if the partition is agreed upon. They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be a partition, it should not be through the British intervention or under the British rule. They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age. Nevertheless, I must speak as I feel if I am to prove a true and loyal friend to the Congress and the British people, as I claim to be. I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief. His inner agony wrings my heart. But, if I gave way to tears, it would be cowardly, and the stalwart Pathan as he is, he would break down. So I go about my business unmoved. That is no small thing."

"But may be," he continued, "all of them are right and I alone am floundering in darkness. I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old soul went through thinking of it. Let it not be said that Gandhi was party to India's vivisection. But everybody is today impatient for independence. Therefore, there is no help." He likened independence-cum-partition to a "wooden loaf": "If the Congress leaders eat it, they die of colic; if they leave it, they starve."

The Congress Working Committee met in the afternoon. At the end of the meeting, it seemed clear that the division of India was inevitable. In the evening, Abdul Ghaffar anticipating the usual demonstration at the prayer congregation during the recitation of the Koranic verses, offered to stay away lest his presence might offend. But Gandhi insisted on his coming. So Abdul Ghaffar accompanied him. With deep sorrow, Gandhi narrated the incident to the congregation. Pointing to Badshah Khan, sitting by his side, he remarked: "See how uneasy and embarrassed he feels. Let it be an object-lesson to you. We must have delicate regard for other's feelings."

On June 2, Lord Mountbatten summoned the leaders and handed them the plan which was to set seal on the creation of two states and the partition of India. On 3 June the plan was broadcast by the Viceroy.

The "3rd June plan", or H.M.G. proposals, envisaged the creation of Pakistan if demanded by the Muslim representatives of the Muslim-majority provinces, and also it provided for the partition of provinces notably Bengal and Punjab, if demanded by a majority of either party in the Legislative Assemblies of these provinces. For this purpose the Legislative Assemblies of the two provinces were to meet in two separate portions representing respectively the districts with Muslim majorities and those without. It proposed that a referendum should be held in the district of Sylhet to decide whether it should remain part of Assam or join up with East Bengal. In the North-West Frontier Province a referendum was to be held to decide whether or not the province was to join Pakistan. With the lapse of the paramountcy the states would be free either to enter the Constituent Assembly or to plough their lonely furrow. The British Government could recognize no Indian state as a separate dominion. It proposed that the transference of power should be antedated, and that pending the completion of the new constitution or constitutions, the basis should be dominion status without prejudice to the future free choice of the Indian people. "Nor is there anything in the plan," the text mentioned, "to preclude negotiations between the communities for a united India."

The Congress Working Committee met on June 3. One of the first points which came up for discussion was the future of N.-W. Frontier Province. The new plan had created a strange situation for the province. Abdul Ghaffar and his party had always supported the Congress and opposed the Muslim League. The League regarded the Khan brothers as mortal enemies. Partition would place the Khan brothers and the Khudai Khidmatgars in an awkward situation, it would throw them at the mercy of the Muslim League.

Abdul Ghaffar was stunned and for several minutes he could hardly utter a word. He then reminded the committee that he had always supported the Congress. If the Congress deserted him, the reaction on the Frontier people would be terrible and his enemies would laugh at him and even his friends would say that so long as the Congress needed the Frontier, they supported the Khudai Khidmatgars. When, however, the Congress wished to come to terms with the Muslim League, it gave up its opposition to partition without even consulting the Frontier and its leaders. Abdul Ghaffar repeatedly said that the Frontier would regard it as an act of treachery if the Congress now threw the Khudai Khidmatgars to the wolves. Both Sardar Patel and Rajagopalachari strongly favoured holding referendum in the Frontier Province. Ultimately, when the Working Committee accepted the partition and the referendum in the Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar told Gandhi and the Working Committee: "We Pakhtuns stood by you and had undergone great sacrifices for attaining freedom, but you have now deserted us and thrown us to the wolves. We shall not agree to hold referendum because we had decisively won the elections on the issue of Hindustan versus Pakistan and proclaimed the Pakhtun view on it to the world. Now as India has disowned us, why should we have a referendum on Hindustan and Pakistan? Let it be on Pakhtunistan or Pakistan."

Abdul Ghaffar emerged from the committee meeting numbed and dejected. It was a death-warrant to the Pakhtuns. He sat on the steps, uttering, "*Toba, Toba.*" He records: "The decision about partition and referendum in the Frontier Province was taken by the High Command without consulting us. Only Gandhiji and I opposed it. Sardar Patel and Rajagopalachari were in favour of partition and holding referendum in our province. The Sardar said I was worrying over nothing. Maulana Azad was sitting near me. Noticing my dejection he said to me, 'You should now join the Muslim League.' It pained me to find how little these companions of ours had understood what we had stood for and fought for all these years. Did they imagine we would compromise our principles for the sake of power? 'Mahatmaji, you have thrown us to the wolves,' I bitterly complained to Gandhiji after the Working

Committee's decision. With an aching heart, Gandhiji replied, he was sure that if the Frontier Province were not given a square deal or if the Khudai Khidmatgars were oppressed, India would feel in honour bound to come to their aid, and he for one would not hesitate to advise Indian Government to treat it as *casus belli.* Gandhiji had later repeated that statement to my son. When Ghani asked him what would happen to his non-violence in that event, Gandhiji had told him not to worry about his non-violence. 'I am non-violent, the Government is not.'"

The Congress Working Committee's formal decision was conveyed in a letter addressed by the Congress President to the Viceroy. It also contained the following sentiment: "We believe as fully as ever in a united India. We earnestly trust that when the present passions have subsided, our problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and a willing union of all parts of India will result therefrom."

Nehru and Patel accepted partition on the understanding that by conceding Pakistan to Jinnah they will hear no more of him and eliminate his nuisance value. Nehru put it privately, "By cutting off the head we will get rid of the headache."

The Muslim League Council, presided over by Jinnah, accepted the British Government's plan "as a compromise" in the interest of peace and tranquillity, while deploring the partition of Bengal and the Punjab.

On the evening of June 3, Lord Mountbatten followed by Nehru and Jinnah spoke to the people on the radio. They all disliked vivisection of India, Nehru said, but they could not let India bleed continuously. A surgical operation was to be preferred under the circumstances.

Just before the leaders were due to broadcast, Gandhi in his prayer speech indicated that the leaders were not above or beyond criticism. Referring to Nehru as "our king", he said, "we should not be impressed by everything the king does or does not do. If he has devised something good, we should praise him. If he has not, then we shall say so."

Speaking on the plan embodied in H.M.G.'s announcement, Gandhi said on June 4 that he had already told them over and over again that to yield even an inch to force was wholly wrong. The Congress Working Committee held that they had not yielded to the force of arms but they had to yield to the force of circumstances. The vast majority of Congressmen did not want unwilling partners. Their motto was non-violence and, therefore, no coercion. Hence, after careful weighing of the pros and cons of the vital issue at stake, they had reluctantly agreed to the secession from the Indian Union that was being framed of those parts which had boycotted the Constituent Assembly. He then expressed sorrow at what he considered was a mistaken policy of the Muslim League. They feared Hindu domination, they said, and desired to rule in what they

were mistaken in calling their homelands. As a matter of fact, however, India was the homeland of all who were born and bred in India. Would the Muslims live in isolation? Was not the Punjab as much the homeland of the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Christians, the Jews and the Parsis who were of the Punjab?

He could not blame Lord Mountbatten for what had happened. It was the act of the Congress and the Muslim League. The Viceroy had openly declared that he wanted a united India but he was powerless in face of the Congress acceptance however reluctantly of the Muslim position.

He had done his best, Gandhi said, to get the people to stand by the Cabinet Mission's statement of the 16th May, but he had failed. But, what was his duty and theirs in the face of the accepted fact? He was a servant of the Congress because he was a servant of the country, and he could never be disloyal to them. Jawaharlal and the Viceroy had said that nothing had been imposed on anyone. The agreement that was embodied in the announcement being a voluntary act of the parties could be varied by them at any stage by mutual consent. He pleaded with the Muslim League, now that their wish was fulfilled, to relieve the Viceroy of the heavy task of being middleman between the parties. Therefore, all violence should stop now. And the Qaid-e-Azam should invite the Congress leaders for a discussion as to the best way of dealing with the further stages.

Referendum

1947

Soon after the announcement of the 3rd June plan, Abdul Ghaffar stated: "It may be a triumph for the Muslim League. It is none for Islam. There are to be two Indias with dominion status for each, pending the decision of the respective Constituent Assemblies. Pathans do not want dominion status even for one day. They would prefer to frame their own constitution and ally themselves to that part of India which makes for complete independence. The Pathans will be friends with the whole world and enemies of none. The question of referendum does not arise. But I would welcome it any day, if it was to be conducted without intimidation and without outside influence. All India knows what travail the Frontier Province has recently passed through and yet may have to. My advice would, therefore, be that the Frontier Province should be left alone till the political atmosphere has cleared. It may be asked to pronounce opinion as to the choice when the two parts have decided on the issue of final independence or membership of the British Commonwealth."

Gandhi was in complete accord with the Khan brothers. In the context of events that were taking place, the proposed referendum would be misconstrued by the fanatics. The Pathans would now be asked, were they to be with the Hindus or with the Muslims? The Congress was not a Hindu organization. But the simple Pathan mind would not be able to grasp the difference in the midst of prevailing confusion. The Muslim League propaganda was mounting, aided by the British officials. To Lord Ismay, the chief of Lord Mountbatten's personal staff, the North-West Frontier Province represented a "bastard situation"—a Muslim-majority province with a Congress ministry in office. The Governor, Sir Olaf Caroe, was siding with the Muslim League. On Monday, June 2, 1947, Gandhi went out of the way to see the Viceroy, especially to convey Abdul Ghaffar's message to remove the Governor. The Congress leaders and the Viceroy were nervous that Gandhi might go to extreme lengths, in one final effort, to prevent the vivisection of India. "Mountbatten faced this interview with considerable trepidation," records Alan Campbell-Johnson. "Imagine his amazement and relief when Mahatma Gandhi indicated on the backs of various used envelopes that he was observing a day of silence. On them the Mahatma had written: "There are one or two things I must talk about, but not

today. But if we meet each other again I shall speak." Mr. Campbell-Johnson has however, omitted the significant written message on the same scrap of papers: "Badshah Khan is with me at the Bhangi Colony. He said, 'Do ask the Viceroy to remove the Governor. We won't have peace till he is gone.' I do not know whether he is right or wrong. He is truthful. If it can be done, Government or you should do it."

Under the 3rd June plan no alteration in the terms of the referendum could be made without the League's concurrence, and the Congress was not prepared at that stage to make an issue of it. Abdul Ghaffar felt strongly that, in the circumstances, participation in the referendum was futile as well as dangerous. Nevertheless, out of deference to his Congress colleagues, he agreed to put the issue to the jirga.

The Congress High Command were of the opinion that the only way for the Pathans to save Pathan autonomy was to fight the referendum with all their might and win it. Otherwise the battle for the Frontier Province as a part of India was lost. But it never had been Gandhi's aim to hold the Frontier Province for India but save it for the Pathans themselves and for the ideal of non-violence that was the uniting bond between Abdul Ghaffar and him. The Frontier Province, setting an example of the non-violence of the brave, could become an asset both to India and Pakistan and might one day even serve as a golden bridge between the two. To that end he tried to utilize the good offices of Lord Mountbatten in his personal capacity. On June 6, in a meeting with him Gandhi suggested that Lord Mountbatten should speak to Jinnah in the following sense:

"I am extremely anxious lest the referendum in the N.-W. Frontier Province should lead to bloodshed and blood feuds between brother and brother Pathan, and I am wondering whether it could possibly be avoided. Now that you have got your Pakistan, would it not be wise for you to go to the Frontier Province and speak to the people of the province of whatever party they may be, including the present ministry and their followers? You could explain what Pakistan, which has hitherto been a vague expression, really is, and present your case in an attractive manner, in the hope that you will be able to woo them to become a province of Pakistan, with perfect freedom to frame their own provincial constitution.

"If you are successful in your persuasion, the proposed referendum and all that it involves would be avoided. If you felt disposed to adopt this suggestion, I could, I think, give you a positive assurance that the Khan brothers and their followers would meet you as friends and give you an attentive hearing."

Gandhi requested that if this appeal to Jinnah was not successful,

he might be informed of the fact, in order that he might consider the position again. He added that Abdul Ghaffar was so anxious about the permanent blood feuds which would result from the referendum, that he would go to almost any length, consistent with honour, to avoid it. In the last resort, he would be prepared to advise his brother and his colleagues in the ministry to resign, and then ask the Viceroy to put the Frontier Province under Section 93.

The Frontier question brought to a head Gandhi's differences with the Congress High Command. Vallabhbhai Patel had an hour's talk with him on the night of June 6. The next day Gandhi wrote to Nehru: "The oftener we meet the more convinced I am becoming that the gulf between us in the thought world is deeper than I had feared. The Sardar says that you are largely responsible for the present situation. He is of the opinion that Badshah Khan's influence is on the wane. Badshah Khan has not left any such impression on me. Whatever he is today, he was always. There is undoubtedly more steadiness today than before. I also feel that Dr. Khan Sahib and his colleagues would be nowhere without the Badshah. He alone counts in so far as the Congress influence is concerned." And referring to his conversations with Lord Mountbatten, he continued: "If the Qaid-e-Azam does not go to the Frontier and does not woo the Badshah, his brother and his other colleagues, the Frontier ministry should resign and also the parliamentary majority on the sole ground that a referendum at this moment must lead to bloodshed and probably, if not certainly, to a lasting blood feud, which they should avoid in so far as it is humanly possible. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur tells me that you think to the contrary. You think that the referendum should take place now. You are also of opinion that a referendum will not cause bloodshed, indeed that my proposal would be more likely to cause it. I do not share this view. I had told the Badshah that if I do not carry you with me, I shall retire at least from the Frontier consultation and let you guide him. I will not and cannot interpose myself between you and him. After all, was it not you who brought him to me? You will now decide and tell me."

Nehru's appreciation of the situation in the N.-W. Frontier Province was set down in a lengthy note. The gist of it was that due largely to the Muslim League agitation and partly to the insistence of the Governor, the question arose a couple of months ago regarding fresh elections and Section 93 regime. This was strongly objected to by the Congress High Command and it was given up. The Muslim League agitation in the Frontier had in many ways been encouraged by the British and Indian officials, but it could easily have been dealt with if this official support had been lacking: "There is no doubt that the Governor and many of

the Frontier officials have not only not co-operated with the provincial government but have actually, sometimes, obstructed its work. Their sympathies lie with the leaders of the Muslim League movement in the Frontier Province, many of whom are old loyalists of the British Government with whom they have had previous contacts. A certain difficulty had arisen in the past few months in regard to these officials. It was well known that they were going, though the date so far was not fixed. Owing to public controversies about them the matter ceased to be one of removal of one or two particular men but became an issue affecting nearly all the officials there. The result was that even individuals, who might have been removed, continued. In any event they are nearly all leaving the Frontier soon and we must proceed on that basis. There is no particular point in our raising the issue now."

The question of referendum, Nehru's note propounded, came up "not exactly on the Pakistan issue" but in view of certain changes and developments in the all-India situation. Even then the stand taken by the Congress High Command was that "apart from other things, there could be no proper election till the Muslim League agitation was withdrawn completely and the consent of the provincial government taken." Later the main plan for changes in India was developed. The result of this was likely to be that Western Punjab would secede from the Union and this would mean the Frontier Province was physically cut off from the Indian Union. "A new situation thus arose and it was again stated that in view of this new situation it would be advisable to have a referendum in the Frontier in order to determine to which Constituent Assembly the North-West Frontier Province desired to belong. The proposal, therefore, was not just meant for the Frontier Province, but became part of a larger plan, which provided for referendum in the Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sylhet. It seemed a logical and reasonable proposal apart from the particular circumstances prevailing."

The question of having a referendum in the Frontier Province thus depended on "certain previous decisions" in the Punjab and Bengal. "But, in all likelihood, parts of Bengal and the Punjab will decide in favour of secession, and so we may take it as almost granted that the question will arise for decision in the North-West Frontier Province. The present position is that the British Government and the Viceroy are definitely committed to this referendum, and some of us are more or less committed. The question of referendum, therefore, appears to be a settled one, and it is not clear how we can get out of it. For the Viceroy it is still more difficult. Any change in the plan, may even lead to conflict on a big scale. We may, therefore, take it as a settled fact that the referendum will take place."

In order to ensure peaceful conditions during the referendum, Nehru explained that it should be organized by British military officers to be imported from outside. "The provincial government would be closely associated with the machinery for this referendum." Normally speaking, he did not think that there was much chance of any "big violent conflict". He was not sure what the result of such a referendum would be. But it seems, on his return from the Frontier Province, the Viceroy had mentioned to him that a number of British officials from the Governor downwards, who were antagonistic to the Congress, had expressed their opinion that the chances were 50:50 and that the referendum might well result in a victory of the Congress although this was not by any means certain.

The proposal that the people of the Frontier should be allowed to vote for sovereign independence raised certain difficulties. "The Viceroy said that he can only agree if the parties agree. It may also introduce an element of confusion in the voting when three issues are before the voter. Votes may well be split."

As for the suggestion that the Frontier Congress should keep out of the referendum, Nehru argued that it would surely mean "accepting the Muslim League's dominance in the North-West Frontier Province—in effect a surrender to the Muslim League agitation". He continued: "Whether it will lead to peaceful conditions or not, it is difficult to say. But I imagine that any such waiver or surrender is even more likely to lead to conflict and bloodshed, because the Muslim League would celebrate this surrender as a great victory for the League. They would be justified then in claiming that the present ministry does not represent the bulk of the population. It seems difficult for the provincial ministry to continue after a decision is given against them by a referendum or by a waiver of referendum. Possibly, the question would immediately arise of another election to the provincial legislature. Having avoided the referendum, we do not avoid trouble and difficulty and the provincial ministry cannot continue. The election takes place anyhow with all its possible evil consequences. The only other course is a peaceful submission to the Pakistan idea, and I doubt very much if most of the Pathans will agree to it."

"The future of the Frontier Province for some considerable time," Nehru emphasized, "is going to be decided and to keep away from the referendum would be to ensure a wrong decision and that too not by the democratic process but by private arrangement". Nehru's note further said: "This seems to me a very dangerous procedure to follow both in regard to avoidance of violence and regarding our own future in the North-West Frontier Province. To fight democratically and to be

defeated does not weaken us for long and we can renew the struggle in other ways later. But to give up without a struggle means a certain lack of integrity through fear of consequences and leads to the collapse of the organization which was unable to face the issue. In view of all these circumstances, it seems to me that the only right course now is for us to accept the referendum and to prepare for it with all our strength. We have a good chance of winning it. We should go to the referendum on the cry that we want the largest measure of freedom and independence in the Frontier. This is not a straight issue of sovereign independence but a slight variation of that theme which should prove helpful. In effect, after Pakistan comes into being in Western Punjab and the Frontier is cut off from India, the North-West Frontier Province will inevitably have, because of this cutting off and other reasons, a very great deal of autonomy and independence."

Nehru, therefore, saw no other course open to the Congress but to accept the referendum and fight it. "If there is risk in this course, there are far greater risks of bloodshed in other courses. The course suggested is a brave and frank course of accepting battle peacefully. To give up the battle, when the final decisions are being taken, will result in deep psychological injury to our people."

What seems to have swayed the judgement of the Congress leaders, was the compulsion of the difficult situation and the role which Lord Mountbatten played in that situation. Nehru's note further said: "To some extent Lord Mountbatten is naturally bound by the past and the present set-up; but he is trying his best to go ahead in the right direction. He realizes the difficulties of the Frontier problem and wants to do everything in his power to solve them. He is convinced, however, that in the peculiar conditions that are arising in India now owing to possible secession of some parts, a chance must be given to the Frontier people to decide themselves by means of a referendum. He is definitely committed himself to this and he cannot get out of it without grave injury to his own prestige and impartiality. He would probably prefer to resign."

In sorrow Gandhi wrote to Nehru on June 9: "If I shared your premises, I shall whole-heartedly agree with you. I am sending your note by a messenger to the Badshah. The more I contemplate the difference in outlook and opinion between the members of the Working Committee and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary . . . May I not go back to Bihar in two or three days?" Touching the root of the matter, he asked Nehru: "Would it be wrong if you insisted that referendum would be wrong without the presentation of the picture of Pakistan?"

To Lord Mountbatten, Gandhi wrote the following detailed note:

"Though you have been good enough to tell me that I could see you at any time I wanted to, I must not avail myself of the kindness. I would like, however, to reduce to writing some of the things I hold to be necessary for the proper and swift working of the scheme.

"1. As to referendum in the Frontier Province I must confess that my idea does not commend itself to Pandit Nehru and his colleagues. As I told you, if my proposal did not commend itself to them, I would not have heart to go any further with it.

"2. This, however, does not in any way affect my proposal that before proceeding with the referendum, you should invite Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to proceed to the Frontier Province and to woo the ministers including Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars who have made the province what it is—better or worse. Before he goes, no doubt, he should be assured of a courteous hearing from them.

"3. Whether he favours the idea or not the Qaid-e-Azam should be asked to give a fair picture of Pakistan scheme before the simple Pathan mind is asked to make its choice of Hindustan or Pakistan. I fancy that the Pathan knows his position in Hindustan. If he does not, the Congress or the Constituent Assembly now at work should be called upon to complete the picture. It will be unfair, I apprehend, to choose between Hindustan or Pakistan without knowing what each is. He should at least know where his entity will be fully protected.

"4. There is as yet no peace in the Frontier Province. Can there be a true referendum when strife has not completely abated? Minds are too heated to think coherently. Neither the Congress nor the League can disown liability for disturbances by their followers. If peace does not reign in the land, the whole superstructure will come to pieces and you will, in spite of division, leave a legacy of which you will not be proud."

Gandhi sent Nehru's note on the Frontier Province to Abdul Ghaffar with the remark: "It is the result of a difference of opinion between him and me. In the circumstances, I must not guide you. Now you have to act as you think best."

In a letter that crossed this, Abdul Ghaffar wrote to Gandhi from Peshawar on June 8: "I have consulted all my important workers and we all are of the considered opinion that we cannot agree to the holding of the referendum on the issues contained in para 4 of 3rd June plan. Moreover, the conditions prevailing in the province at the moment are such that the holding of the referendum will lead to serious violence. We are also against Pakistan and we would like to have a free Pathan state within India."

On receipt of Nehru's note, he again wrote to Gandhi on June 11: "This evening a joint meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee,

Congress Parliamentary Party and the Salars of the Khudai Khidmatgars was held for about four hours. Representatives from all over the province took part in the meeting. The consensus of opinion was that we should not take part in the referendum. They all desired that the issue be amended on the basis of Pakistan or free Pathan state."

On June 12 Lord Mountbatten wrote to Gandhi:

"I spoke to Mr. Jinnah along the lines that you asked me and he has authorized me to reply to you as follows:

"1. Mr. Jinnah will gladly accept your suggestion that he should visit the Frontier and put the question of Pakistan to the leaders and people up there, provided you can obtain an understanding from the Congress that they will not interfere.

"2. He agrees with your view that by this means a referendum can be avoided and with it the risk of bloodshed removed . . ."

Gandhi wrote to Mountbatten: "I have sent a letter to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah . . . The condition precedent to the Qaid-e-Azam accepting my suggestion is dangerous in its implications . . . The visit, therefore, if it takes place, will take place for convincing and converting the ministers and Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars. It should in no sense be a propaganda tour."

Gandhi's letter to Jinnah said: "His Excellency the Viceroy writes saying, 'You will gladly accept my suggestion and put the case of Pakistan to the leaders and the people there, provided I can obtain an undertaking from the Congress that they will not interfere.' I do not know what you mean by the undertaking from the Congress that they will not interfere."

Jinnah curtly retorted: "I thought it was quite clear what I meant that the Congress should undertake that they will not interfere with the people of the Frontier in any way whatsoever."

Gandhi wrote to Jinnah on June 14: "I had hoped that His Excellency had not clearly understood your meaning. I now see that I was mistaken. I cannot ask the Congress to commit hara-kiri."

A correspondent wrote to Gandhi that he who had once proclaimed that the vivisection of India would mean vivisection of himself, had now weakened. The writer had also invited him to lead the opposition to the proposed division. He could not plead guilty to the taunt. When he made the statement, he was voicing public opinion. But when the public opinion was against him, was he to coerce it? The writer had further argued that he had often held that there was no compromise with untruth or evil. The assertion was correct. But the application must also be correct. He made bold to say that if only the non-Muslim India was with him, he could show the way to undo the proposed partition. But then

he freely admitted that he had become or was rather considered a back number. We had forgotten the lesson we had learnt for the past thirty years. We had forgotten that untruth was to be conquered by truth, and violence by non-violence, impatience by patience, and heat by cold. We had begun to fear our own shadows. Many had invited him to head the opposition. But there was nothing in common between them and him except the opposition. The basis of his opposition seemed to be wholly different from that of the invitees. Could hate and love combine?

In mid-June the All-India Congress Committee met in Delhi. There was a very strong feeling against the Working Committee's resolution. It became, therefore, necessary for Gandhi to intervene in the debate. Addressing the delegates for forty minutes, Gandhi commended the resolution accepting the 3rd June plan. Those who talked in terms of an immediate revolution or of an upheaval in the country would achieve it by throwing out this resolution, but then he asked if they had strength to take over the reins of the Congress and the Government. "Well, I have not that strength, else I would declare rebellion today," he added.

His views on the plan were well known, he said. The acceptance of the plan did not involve only the Working Committee. There were two other parties to it, the British Government and the Muslim League. If at this stage the A.-I.C.C. rejected the Working Committee's decisions, what would the world think of it? All parties had accepted it and surely it would not be proper for the Congress to go back on its word. If the A.-I.C.C. felt so strongly on this point that this plan would do a lot of injury, then it could reject the plan. The consequence of such a rejection would be the finding of a new set of leaders who could constitute not only the Working Committee but also take charge of the Government. If the opponents of the resolution could find such a set of leaders, the A.-I.C.C. could then reject the resolution, if it so felt. They should not forget, at the same time, that peace in the country was very essential at this juncture.

The Congress was surely opposed to Pakistan and he also steadfastly opposed the division of India. Yet, he had come before the A.-I.C.C. to urge the acceptance of the resolution on India's division. Sometimes, certain decisions, however unpalatable they might be, had to be taken. The members of the Working Committee were old and tried leaders who were responsible for all the achievements of the Congress hitherto and, in fact, they formed the backbone of the Congress and it would be most unwise, if not impossible, to replace them at the present juncture. The Congressmen should understand what their own duty was and do it silently. Out of mistakes, sometimes, good emerged. Rama was exiled because of his father's mistake, but ultimately his exile resulted in the

defeat of Ravana, the evil. "I admit," Gandhi added, "that whatever is accepted is not good, but good will certainly emerge out of it." The A.-I.C.C., he hoped, was capable of extracting good out of this defective plan, even as gold was extracted from dirt. The plan had afforded them of an opportunity to disprove Jinnah Saheb's theory that the Muslims were a separate nation and they were something apart from the Hindus. Even the smallest minority should now feel secure and happy in India. He would urge that by accepting an imperfect plan they could all the same extract good out of it and make India a land where there was no discrimination and where there were no inequalities.

At the conclusion of the debate, the resolution was passed, 157 voting for it and 15 against it, with some abstentions.

Speaking at the prayer meeting on June 16, Gandhi said:

"Today I am told that the law of love has ceased to be effective. Now I ask you, what brings you daily to these prayer meetings? There is no compulsion. Still you come drawn by love and patiently listen to what I say. If all Hindus listened to me, we could set an example which the world would be forced to follow.

"You will ask why I do not tell this to the Muslims. My reply is that they today regard me as their enemy. The Hindus do not regard me as their enemy. That is why I tell them to throw their weapons into sea and realize the matchless potency of the non-violence of the brave.

"Have I that non-violence of the brave in me? My death alone will show that. If someone killed me and I died with prayer for the assassin on my lips and God's remembrance and consciousness of His living presence in the sanctuary of my heart, then alone would be said to have had the non-violence of the brave. If Hindus, nay even the Sikhs alone developed that capacity and courage, they would solve the problem of India.

"But today even Badshah Khan, the brave and valiant Pathan that he is, lacks it in full measure. He is afraid that if anybody said to the Pathans that the N.-W. Frontier Province should join the Indian Union, it would lead to fratricidal conflict amongst them on an unprecedented scale. What can he do? Non-violence of the brave is not a thing that can be manufactured to order."

On June 18 Abdul Ghaffar accompanied by Gandhi met Jinnah at the Viceroy's house, and later again he met Jinnah at his residence. Now that the division of India was accepted by the Congress, Abdul Ghaffar told Jinnah that the Pathans were quite agreeable to joining Pakistan, provided (1) it was on honourable terms, (2) in case Pakistan, after independence, decided to stay under the British domination, the Pathans in the Settled Districts or in the tribal areas should have the

power to opt out of such a dominion and form a separate independent state, and (3) all matters concerning tribal people should be settled by the Pathans themselves without the interference or domination of the non-Pathans—a right which had been conceded even by the existing Constituent Assembly. The talks lasted over an hour in friendly atmosphere, although the attempt at compromise failed. Jinnah accompanied Abdul Ghaffar to the waiting car to bid him farewell.

Speaking at a prayer meeting on June 18 Gandhi said that Badshah Khan was straining every nerve to find some means of avoiding bloodshed in the Frontier Province. He asked the congregation to pray with him for Badshah Khan's mission. Referring to the movement for a free Frontier state called Pathanistan, he said that the movement had come to stay, for it was a solid movement. If it was an anti-Indian movement, it was a bad and mischievous thing. If it was meant to conserve, as he thought it was, Pathan life and culture, it deserved every encouragement. Geographically, it was only a bit of India and numerically too, the Pathans were very few compared to the millions of India. But their warlike qualities and their position on the map of India gave them an importance all their own. The Frontier was a Congress province. It was so when the Congress was in the wilderness. And it was now too when it was in power. It was also represented on the Constituent Assembly. But now it was face to face with a delicate position. There was a referendum immediately to be held. Both the Congress and the League were committed to it. It was not open to any party to vary the terms. The issue was to be Pakistan or Hindustan. This had a sinister meaning in the context of what had happened in front of them. Were they to be with the Hindus or with the Muslims? The Congress was not a Hindu organization. It never was and, he hoped, never would be. But how could the Pathan mind grasp the difference in the midst of confusion becoming worse confounded from day to day? He would advise the Congress to make its position clear and would ask the Muslim League also to do likewise. Let both honour the Pathan sentiment and let the Pathans have their own constitution for internal affairs and administration. It would promote Pathan solidarity, avoid internal conflict, retain Pakhtu culture and the Pakhtu language. If they could do that, they would be better able unitedly to federate with Pakistan or the Union of India. And this he would advise whether there was or was not a referendum. Any premature referendum would be a leap in the dark.

Gandhi, who had requested Abdul Ghaffar to meet Jinnah with his prayers, felt greatly disturbed over the result of the interview. He kept awake till half-past twelve that night. Getting up before the usual 3 o'clock in the morning, he began to ruminate: "I cannot cease thinking

of Badshah Khan even when I have ceased to desire to live up to 125 years. Badshah Khan is a prodigy. I am seeing more and more of his deeply spiritual nature daily. He has patience, faith and non-violence joined in true humility. Countless Pathans have enshrined him in their hearts as their uncrowned king. For such a person there can be no defeat. I am sure he will not shrink from any sacrifice or suffering, but will die serving the Pathans with his last breath. He lives only for that. He is a man of penance, also of illumination, with love for all and hatred towards none."

Gandhi then laid himself down and tried to sleep, but after a while, he again opened his eyes and said: "No, I can't sleep. The thought of him has robbed me of my sleep."

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, the Diwan of Travancore, condemned Gandhi and the Congress for being willing to concede an independent Pathanistan for the Frontier Province. How then could they object to an independent Travancore? he asked.

The analogy, observed Gandhi, did not hold. The Pathans did not seek to be independent. They only wanted the freedom to frame their own constitution after the full face of Pakistan and the Indian Union was exposed to view. They did not want to be a third state but only autonomous like any of the other provinces, owing allegiance to the Centre but having no interference in their internal affairs. If Badshah Khan meant anything different, he for one would have no hesitation in breaking with him, an old friend though he was. What Sir C.P., however, wanted was a state independent of both the dominions. If this were allowed and the example followed by others, the consequence of it would be that India would be split up into several states. These petty states would need an emperor and the emperor who was leaving might even return with redoubled force. That would be a disaster too dreadful to contemplate. The analogy between Travancore and the Frontier Province was again misleading in that Sir C.P. spoke for the maharaja, the Frontier leaders spoke for the jirga, the people. One was unadulterated autocracy, the other full democracy.

The failure of talks with Jinnah was followed by a vicious attack on Abdul Ghaffar in the Muslim League press, especially in the *Dawn*. On June 19, Abdul Ghaffar wrote to Jinnah:

"I have been pained to read the *Dawn's* report. There are some statements in it which are completely untrue, such as that the Congress has refused financial help to me and my 'henchmen'. No question of asking for or getting financial help has arisen and there is no reference to it whatever.

"I paid a visit to you so that, if possible, we might find a way out,

peaceful and honourable to all concerned. Unfortunately, we could not agree. But in any event the tone and manner as well as the contents of *Dawn* are not such as to lead to a friendly approach or a settlement."

After consulting all his Frontier colleagues Abdul Ghaffar intimated Jinnah of the following resolution: "This meeting of the members of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Parliamentary Party, the Khudai Khidmatgars and Zalme Pakhtuns held at Bannu on June 21, 1947, under the chairmanship of Khan Amir Mohammed Khan, President of the Frontier Provincial Committee, unanimously resolves that a free Pathan state of all the Pakhtuns be established. The constitution of the state will be framed on the basis of Islamic conception of democracy, equality and social justice. This meeting appeals to all the Pathans to unite for the attainment of this cherished goal and not to submit to any non-Pakhtun domination."

In a statement dated Peshawar, June 24, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"Great changes that are now taking place in India as a result of the ending of the British domination not only affect the whole of India but the Frontier Province also. I have given considerable thought to these changes and have also consulted my co-workers.

"For more than a generation we struggled for freedom in the Frontier. In the course of this struggle, we Pathans suffered great hardships but we have never given up the struggle. Our struggle was against the British rule and domination, and in this we allied ourselves with the Indian National Congress, the great organization which was similarly fighting the British.

"Naturally, in the circumstances, we found ourselves in close alliance and comradeship with the Congress. When we in the Frontier were in great trouble in the course of the freedom struggle, it was the Congress that came to our help, which, in spite of our requests, the League refused to give. As a matter of fact many of the present Muslim League leaders of the Frontier helped the British against their kith and kin.

"Our struggle all along had been for the freedom of India and more especially of the Pathans. We want complete freedom. That ideal of ours still remains with us and we shall work for it.

"Unfortunately, recent developments have placed great difficulties in our way. In the announcement of June 3, it has been stated that a referendum will be held in the North-West Frontier Province where the only alternative which will be put before the electors of the present Legislative Assembly, will be whether to join the Indian Union Constituent Assembly or the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. This limits our choice to two alternatives, neither of which we are prepared to accept. We cannot vote as we want to vote for a free Pathan state.

"We must also take into consideration all that has happened in the Frontier Province during the last few months. An organized campaign of terrorism was launched by the Leaguers which resulted in murder of hundreds of innocent men, women and children. Property worth crores was destroyed through loot and arson. The whole atmosphere, therefore, was surcharged with communal frenzy and passion.

"Even now leading members of the Muslim League are carrying on a raging campaign to frighten people from voting against them in the referendum.

"Evidently, they not only intend to prevent tens of thousands of refugees who have gone out of the province from voting in the referendum but are threatening others who are in the province from voting by telling that they do so at their own peril. They remind them of the horrible outrages which disfigured the face of our province during the last few months. Religious passions of the unsophisticated Pathans also are being roused by describing the contest on the present issues as one between kafirs and Islam.

"Holding a referendum in the circumstances and on present issues, which are essentially communal in their nature, appears to be the result of a deep-seated conspiracy. The attitude adopted by some of the highly placed officials and statesmen, who characterize the League agitation in the Frontier as 'peaceful', lends support to the above inference.

"It is necessary to provide an opportunity for us to vote in the referendum for a free Pathan state.

"The Viceroy said that he was unable to change the procedure laid down except with the consent of the parties. I consulted with the leaders of the Congress who assured me that they were perfectly willing for this opportunity to be given to us. Mr. Jinnah, however, on behalf of the Muslim League, entirely opposed the idea of a free Pathan state, and he would not agree to an opportunity to be given to us to vote on this issue. It is, therefore, clear that the League wants to take full advantage of the communal issues involved.

"Because of the desire of my co-workers and mine in the matter, I tried my utmost to reach a settlement between the various parties concerned. I regret this has not been possible, because Mr. Jinnah will not agree. Perhaps he thought that I had seen him because of our weakness; I approached him as a Muslim for maintaining the unity amongst the Muslims. It is not out of our weakness that I approached him but out of strength of our cause and because of our earnest desire to have peace in the Frontier as well as freedom.

"I maintain that a great majority of the Pakhtuns are for the establishment of a free Pathan state. With a view to ascertain the will of the

people in this respect, I am prepared for holding a referendum or the general election.

"What are we to do in these circumstances? I am convinced that we cannot associate ourselves with the referendum because of the above difficulties. I would appeal to all Khudai Khidmatgars and others who believe in a free Pathan State not to participate in the referendum and keep away from it peacefully.

"But this does not mean that we should sit still. A new struggle has been forced upon us. After bringing into a successful conclusion of our eighteen-year-old struggle for freedom against the British domination, we are now faced with a new danger. Not only liberty of Pakhtuns but their very existence is at stake. I, therefore, call upon all Pathans who have love of their motherland at heart to unite and work for achieving the cherished goal.

"How I wish that even at this eleventh hour Mr. Jinnah had recognized the justice of our position and refrained from dividing Pathans from Pathans."

Addressing a meeting on June 27, Abdul Ghaffar stated: "We have decided to establish Pathanistan, which will be an independent state of all the Pathans. There will be no king and the land will be ruled by the entire Pathan nation jointly. For this independence of the Pathans we sided with the Congress and we fought our common enemy jointly. We were then called Hindus and Hindu agents, but now when we have refused to join Hindustan, we are forced to fight the referendum on the issue of Pakistan versus Hindustan."

"Let us organize for freedom from any domination," he said. "After that we can keep brotherly relations with the other Muslim countries in the interests of both. Have not Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Arabia and Egypt their own separate governments? Are they not all Muslims? But even according to the very principles of Islam, charity begins at home. Will it not be dishonest on my part to throw my Pathan brethren into the dark, unknown future? Not only we but the entire world is expecting a dreadful future. The seeds of the third world war have already been sown. Every country is trying to keep that war away from its frontiers. For that emergency the Britishers want to make the Frontier Province a military base against Russia. In this connection the arrival of General Montgomery into India and his meetings with Mr. Jinnah are indeed most significant."

The final decision of the Khan brothers was conveyed by the Congress President to the Viceroy on June 28:

"Whenever the question of the Frontier arose, we told you that it would be necessary to consult the Frontier ministers and leaders before

a final answer could be given on our behalf. The matter concerned them intimately and they were the best judges of the situation. They were very much averse to any issue being raised in the province which could be exploited as purely communal or Hindu-Muslim issue. The best way to avoid it was to put forward the real issue. This was the creation of a free Pathan state which would later decide on its relations with the Indian Union or Pakistan. In accordance with this strong sentiment, I wrote to you in my letter dated June 2nd that 'the proposed referendum should provide for the people voting for independence and subsequent decision as to their relation with the rest of India.' I understand that you have been unable to agree to this unless the Muslim League also agreed. This had added to our difficulties and we have been giving anxious thought to the matter.

"We have accepted the plan. At the same time, we cannot impose any course of action on the North-West Frontier Province to which the leader and the people there are opposed. We have again conferred with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He tells us that there is a strong and insistent demand that the Frontier people should be allowed to pronounce on the issue of independence. They are totally averse to taking part in a referendum which must turn purely on the communal issue. Badshah Khan contends that if the issue cannot be between Pathanistan and Pakistan, he would advise his followers to abstain from participating in the referendum. This, he holds, will ease the situation somewhat, though the province may be lost to the Congress at least for the time being."

On June 29 Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy:

"Badshah Khan writes to me to say that he is carrying out the plan I had discussed with you and he with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. The plan was to move for free Pathanistan framing its own local constitution, and when the Pakistan and Indian Union constitutions were out, to decide either to belong to one state or the other. In this move he has failed. Therefore, the referendum would go on without any interference by his followers, the latter abstaining from voting either way. He fully realizes that in this case the Frontier would probably go to Pakistan.

"He wants me also to draw your attention to the fact that the Punjab Muslims, men and women, are being freely introduced in the Frontier Province to affect the referendum and that notable non-Frontier Muslims too have been sent to the Frontier Province for the same purpose. This increases the risk of bloodshed and worse.

"He also says that the non-Muslim refugees numbering many thousands will have no chance, so far as he is aware, of taking part in the referendum and they are threatened with dire penalty should they dare to exercise their votes.

"I see in today's papers that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah contends that if the Pathans abstain from voting, the abstention will constitute a breach of the terms of the referendum. I do not see the force of the contention."

Jinnah charged that the Congress support for "Pathanistan" was "a direct breach of the acceptance by the Congress party of the 3rd June plan. He attacked Gandhi as well as Abdul Ghaffar, for continuing to promote the idea and promised that the Frontier would be, in an unspecified way, an autonomous unit of Pakistan. Malicious propaganda was also launched by the Muslim Leaguers that the Khan brothers had sent an emissary to Kabul to encourage the Afghan Government to demand the revision of the Durand Line, which constituted the boundary between India and Afghanistan.

In a letter to Nehru, Dr. Khan Sahib wrote: "We assure you that we have never thought of joining Afghanistan . . . We have also learnt for the first time that the Afghan Government have officially approached the Government of India. We have been placed in an unenviable position; naturally, the Afghan Government are taking advantage of it and are exploiting the situation. We know nothing of a Congress emissary approaching the Afghan Government."

Speaking at the prayer meeting on June 30 Gandhi said:

"The question of the referendum in the Frontier Province just now looms large in the public eye, because it has been and is still officially a Congress province. Badshah Khan and his co-workers do not relish being asked to choose between Hindustan or Pakistan, bearing respectively the unjust meaning: Hindus or Muslims. How is Badshah Khan to get over the difficulty? The Congress has pledged its word that there should be a referendum in consultation with Dr. Khan Sahib but under the Viceroy's direct supervision. And so it is going to take place at the appointed time. The Khudai Khidmatgars will not exercise their votes, thus providing a walk-over for the Muslim League and at the same time doing no violence to their conscience. Is there in this procedure any breach of the terms of the referendum? The Khudai Khidmatgars who bravely fought the British are not the men to shirk defeat at the polls. It is an everyday occurrence for parties to go to the polls, sometimes, on the chance of certain defeat. Defeat is no less certain for a boycotting party.

"The charge of the new cry of Pathanistan is being flung in Badshah Khan's face. Even before the Congress ministry came into being, so far as I know, Badshah Khan had on the brain Pathan independence in internal matters. He does not want to create an additional state. If he can frame his own local constitution, he will gladly make his choice of the one state or the other. It is difficult for me to understand the

objection to this yearning after Pathan autonomy, unless the object is to humiliate the Pathans and to tame them into subjection.

"The more serious charge is that the Badshah is playing into the hands of Afghanistan. I consider him to be incapable of any underhand dealing. He would not allow the Frontier Province to be absorbed by Afghanistan.

"As his friend and because I am his friend, I must admit one failing of his. He is highly suspicious especially of the British profession and intentions. I would urge on all to overlook this failing, which is by no means peculiar to him. Only it does not sit well on a leader of his eminence. I contend that though I have called it a failing, and which it is one way, in another it is to be regarded as a virtue in that he cannot, if he tries, conceal his thoughts. He is too honest to hide them."

On July 4 the Viceroy wrote to Gandhi: "It is reported to me from the Frontier that Red Shirts are now 'persuading' people not to vote. I think you will agree that any action of this sort is likely to lead to the very violence you and I are so anxious to avoid. I trust that if the reports are true, in view of the policy stated in your letter, you will be able to persuade Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to implement that policy."

On July 5 Gandhi replied: "Agitation is undoubtedly being carried on today by Badshah Khan and his lieutenants to tell the voters that it is wrong for them to take part in the voting. There should be no demonstration during the voting days and there should be no approach to the voters during the voting time. If this is what you mean, I shall be glad to refer to the matter in those terms at the evening prayer. I am quite prepared to adopt quicker means of reaching Badshah Khan if you suggest any. If you have any other thing in view, you will please let me know."

The Viceroy appealed to Gandhi: "If you could go a little further and deprecate any agitation before the polling days which might lead directly or indirectly to disturbances, I would naturally be grateful. It is important, I think, that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan should have your advice as soon as possible, and if you would care to send him a letter, I could arrange to get it delivered to Peshawar by hand of pilot and ask the Governor to send it on. I am most grateful for your help."

In his second letter of July 5, Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy: "I received your kind letter of even date just after I had finished my prayer speech and was going out for my walk. Fortunately, at noon, I had a visit from a Pathan whom I had known to be a Khudai Khidmatgar. He was going to Peshawar and so I gave him a message which I have reproduced in the letter I enclose herewith. You may read the letter, and if you think that it covers the new point you have raised, you may

send the letter by special messenger as suggested by you. I am hoping that there will be no disturbance on the part of Badshah Khan and his followers. In the message that I sent through the Pathan Khudai Khidmatgar I covered much more ground than mentioned in my letter to Badshah Khan."

Gandhi's letter addressed to "Dear Badshah", dated July 5, said:

"Khudai Khidmatgar Alam Khan saw me before 12 o'clock and he said that he was leaving for Peshawar tonight. I did not send any letter through him. But I told him that there should be no demonstration against the Muslim League, that it should be enough that in the present state of tension and misrepresentation Khudai Khidmatgars should not vote at all one way or the other, that they were entitled so far as internal affairs were concerned to claim and to have complete autonomy without any interference from Pakistan or the Union, and that they could come to a decision as to the choice between the Union or Pakistan when the constitutions of the two were promulgated and when the Frontier Province had fashioned its own autonomous constitution. Above all, every occasion for clash with the Muslim League members was to be avoided. Real Pathan bravery was now on its trial. It was to be shown by cheerfully meeting blows or even meeting death at the hands of the opponents without the slightest sort of retaliation. Boycott would certainly result in a legal victory for Pakistanis, but it would be a moral defeat, if without the slightest fear of violence from your side, the bulk of Pathans refrained in a dignified manner from participating in the referendum. There should be no fuss, no procession, and no disobedience of any orders from the authority.

"I had acted promptly on receipt of your letter. I wrote a long letter to His Excellency on which he took action. You must have seen also how I had dealt with the question of the Frontier Province in one of my post-prayer speeches. I send you herewith a copy of my letter to the Viceroy and of my post-prayer speech. This letter is also in answer to a complaint received by the Viceroy that it was reported that there was fear of disturbance to be caused by the Khudai Khidmatgars.

"I hope the strain under which you are working is not telling upon your health."

Two days later, Gandhi again wrote to him: "No news from you. I hope you had my long letter and that you have acted up to it. Your and my honour is involved in strict adherence to non-violence on our part in thought, word and deed. No news up to now (9.30) in the papers. Love, Bapu."

Abdul Ghaffar's letter, dated July 12, conveyed disturbing news:

"I and my workers have been going about from village to village

asking the people to remain absolutely non-violent even under provocation on the part of the Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim Leaguers are daily taking out processions, raising highly objectionable slogans. They call us kafirs and resort to abusive language. I have been personally hooted. I feel that there is organized conspiracy between the Muslim Leaguers, the officials and the officers in the charge of the referendum. Presiding officers have actively encouraged the passing of hundreds of bogus votes. In some places eighty to ninety per cent votes have been polled, a thing unheard of in any election, and more so on the basis of an electoral roll which was prepared about two years ago.

"We have been working under very difficult and trying circumstances but have adhered to non-violence in thought, word and deed. How long a state of affairs like this can last, it is not easy for me to say. In a nutshell, the Muslim Leaguers backed by officials are out to create disturbances. We have done everything humanly possible to avoid a clash.

"Another matter which is causing serious concern to us is the presence in our province of a large number of Punjabis who openly incite people to violence. Not only that, but they have also gone to the length of suggesting in public meetings that the top leaders of the Red Shirts should be done away with. They also proclaim openly that after Pakistan has been established, there will be a trial on the lines of the Nuremberg trial and all of them who are called as traitors will be hanged. Mr. Jalal-ud-din, M.L.A. (Hazara), stated in a public meeting that if any of the Muslim ministers visited Hazara, he would be killed."

In July the Indian Independence Bill was introduced in the House of Commons, receiving the Royal Assent within three days. In the meanwhile, the members in the Punjab and Bengal Assemblies had confirmed the partition of their provinces.

The Frontier referendum began on July 6. The Governor, Sir Olaf Caroe, was retired on leave while the referendum was being held. The governorship and the conduct of referendum were placed in the hands of Sir Rob Lockhart, until then the chief of the Southern Command of the Indian Army. On July 18 the Frontier referendum was completed, the final results being announced on July 20 as follows: For Pakistan, 2,89,244 votes; for India 2,874 votes. This meant only fifty per cent of the total electorate of the province had expressed a desire for Pakistan. The Khudai Khidmatgars abstained from voting, and the boycott took place quietly and in good order in all areas. The gesture however futile, was the last powerful expression of the Khudai Khidmatgars.

"In the most adverse circumstances the referendum was held in our province," narrates Abdul Ghaffar. "The Khudai Khidmatgars were angry and dejected; they boycotted the referendum. The police and the

military took a large number of people to the polling-booths and even fraudulent registration of names, in favour of the Muslim League, was resorted to. Colonel Bashir told me that his company stationed near Bannu was taken thrice by him to the polling-booth to cast their votes in favour of Pakistan. The vote of the President of the Frontier Province Congress Committee, to quote a concrete case, was impersonated."

"The question whether we wanted to join Hindustan or Pakistan was improper," he continues. "Hindustan had already deserted us and had handed us over to the enemies, hence it was against the Pakhtun pride and character to thrust ourselves on Hindustan. On the issue of Pakistan, we already had given our firm verdict against joining it. And, therefore, we demanded that if referendum was to be held, let it be on the issue of Pakhtunistan or Pakistan. Our demand was ignored and the referendum on the issue of Hindustan or Pakistan was thrust upon us."

"The election results of 1946 gave a clear mandate to the Khudai Khidmatgars," emphasizes Abdul Ghaffar. "But the Britishers wanted to punish us by thrusting referendum on our province. Elsewhere the provincial assemblies were asked to vote for Hindustan or Pakistan, but ours was treated as an exceptional case. The representative character of the Frontier Province Assembly was ignored. Out of disgust and anger we decided to place our grievance before the whole world and register our protest by boycotting the referendum. What pained me most was that the Congress Working Committee did not stand by us and surrendered the Pakhtuns to the enemies in helpless condition. In the case of Assam, when its Chief Minister, Bardoloi, opposed the grouping clause of the Cabinet Mission plan, the Congress Working Committee did not show that apathy and got the clause rescinded. I was not against the grouping clause and when Gandhiji asked me the reason, I said that I can support any scheme but not the partition of India."

"Our people have been greatly disappointed by the weakness shown by the Congress," observes Abdul Ghaffar. "I regret to say that not we but the Congress deserted us. If we had agreed to leave the Congress, the Britishers would have granted us all our demands, and it is my firm conviction that if the Congress lent support to our demand, as it had done in the case of Gurdaspur, Jinnah would have been compelled to agree to our proposal—Pakhtunistan or Pakistan. Jinnah sent us messages time and again to make common cause with him, in which case he would concede to us whatever we wanted. One such message came to me when the partition was being discussed by the Congress Working Committee. It was to the effect that since India was in any case going to be divided, why did we not join him and the Muslim League and obtain whatever we wished. We never compromised our principles."

"As we took no part in the referendum," he concludes, "the Muslim League had no hurdles to cross. In spite of violence, deception, fraud and the British complicity, the League got hardly 50 per cent votes, and the fate of Pakhtuns was sealed."

Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad believed that the referendum results were a definite indication of the waning of the influence of the Khan brothers in the Frontier Province. Maulana Azad said that one of the reasons of the Khan brothers' "unpopularity" was that they would not offer even biscuits to their Pathan visitors and their tight-fistedness in the use of funds put at their disposal by the Congress. The first statement Abdul Ghaffar regarded as a libel on the Pakhtun tradition. It was incorrect both in fact and in inference. A Pathan would share his last crumb of bread with his guest. As for lavish use of funds, he had always been opposed to it on principle as well as on the practical grounds. The Khudai Khidmatgar organization counted its membership in lakhs. Whatever funds the Congress might provide would be a mere drop in the ocean. Besides, reliance on Congress aid would corrupt and weaken them. To make their organization powerful, what they needed was not money but character. Funds would soon be exhausted, but if they laid store by character, it would be an inexhaustible source of vitality. "The Khudai Khidmatgar movement is not purely a political organization, but it is political, social, moral and spiritual. The Khudai Khidmatgars have never asked for any monetary help from outside. We received no money from the Congress and if they gave money it was received by the Congress Parliamentary Board of the Frontier Province. We consider it a crime before God to spend the public funds unnecessarily. Our movement has never waned and never will."

Abdul Ghaffar arrived in New Delhi on July 27 for consultation with Gandhi. They had prolonged talks. Gandhi left for Kashmir on July 30 and Abdul Ghaffar returned to his province. Gandhi told him his duty lay there "to make Pakistan really *pak*, pure." They never met again.

After the referendum and the partition of India, Abdul Ghaffar did not correspond with any of his colleagues in India. He was a victim of vilification and persecution in Pakistan. In November disquieting reports reached Gandhi. These made him feel deeply concerned about the Khan brothers' safety. In a letter to Abdul Ghaffar, Gandhi suggested to him openly to leave the Frontier Province and to develop the non-violent technique from India. "This you can do here with me or otherwise," wrote Gandhi. "What that otherwise can be, I do not know." The only other alternative was to remain where he was and let the Pakistan authorities do their worst. "I do not believe," concluded Gandhi, "as some do, that non-violence can only be offered in a civilized or partially

civilized society. Non-violence admits of no such limit." In reply Abdul Ghaffar sent word to Gandhi not to worry but just send him and his associates his blessings and prayer.

On January 30, 1948, Gandhi died a martyr, at the hands of a Hindu fanatic, to the cause of unity to which he had always been devoted. He died battling against violence and hatred. Abdul Ghaffar and his son were having their meals in Shahi Bagh, a village, when they heard the shocking news on the air. They could eat no more, they were dazed. The Khudai Khidmatgars held a condolence meeting to express their great loss in the death of Gandhi, their constant support and friend. "He was the only ray of light to help us through these darkest days," exclaimed Abdul Ghaffar, his most devoted and greatest follower.

Citizen Of Pakistan

1947–8

PAKISTAN was inaugurated on August 14, 1947, a day before the inauguration of free India. Jinnah became its first Governor-General. Pakistan is the only state to have arisen on a religious rather than on national foundation. Since the Muslims formed a compact majority only in the north-west and north-east of British India, Pakistan was constituted out of two areas, situated at the far corners of the subcontinent. These came to be called West Pakistan and East Pakistan. In all, Pakistan received 23 per cent of the territory and 19 per cent of the population of undivided India.

The people of the Frontier Province showed little enthusiasm in the inaugural celebrations of Pakistan. Thanks to the great discipline shown by the Khudai Khidmatgars the hoisting of the Pakistani flag at all government buildings on August 15 took place without any untoward incident. On that day, Sir George Cunningham, the then Governor of the Frontier Province, took the oath of allegiance. Dr. Khan Sahib and his colleagues were invited to attend the ceremony but not asked to take the oath. After the oath-taking there was also to be flag-hoisting ceremony. The Governor asked Dr. Khan Sahib whether he and his colleagues would attend this ceremony also. Dr. Khan Sahib replied that they would, of course, do so. Thereupon, the Governor warned him saying that as the arrangements of the ceremony were in the hands of the Muslim League National Guards, they—Dr. Khan Sahib and his colleagues—could do so on their own responsibility and that he, the Governor, could not take the responsibility for their safety. Dr. Khan Sahib apprehended some foul play and, therefore, did not attend the function. "We were never asked to take the oath of allegiance, we were simply asked to resign immediately, which we refused to do. And then our ministry was dismissed." On August 22, 1947, Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry was replaced by Abdul Qaiyum's ministry.

On the 3rd and 4th September, at a large gathering consisting of the Provincial Jirga, the Parliamentary Party, the Zalme Pakhtun, Khudai Khidmatgars and representatives from tribal areas, at Sardaryab, the following resolutions were passed:

"(*a*) The Khudai Khidmatgars regard Pakistan as their own country and pledge that they shall do their utmost to strengthen and safeguard its interest and make every sacrifice for the cause.

"(*b*) The dismissal of Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry and the setting up of Abdul Qaiyum's ministry is undemocratic, but as our country is passing through a critical stage, the Khudai Khidmatgars shall take no step which might create difficulties in the way of either the Provincial or Central Government.

"(*c*) After the division of the country the Khudai Khidmatgars sever their connection with the All-India Congress organisation and, therefore, instead of the Tricolour adopt the Red Flag as the symbol of their party."

At this gathering Abdul Ghaffar once more defined his demand of Pakhtunistan to mean full freedom for the Pakhtuns to manage their internal affairs as a unit within the Pakistan state. "This new state," ran one of the resolutions, "will comprise the present six Settled Districts of the North-West Frontier Province and all such other contiguous areas inhabited by the Pakhtuns which may wish to join the new state of their own free will. The state will enter into agreement on defence, external affairs, and communications with Pakistan."

"I have been working for the establishment of Pakhtunistan all my life," he asserted. "It was for the purpose of achieving unity among the Pakhtuns that the Khudai Khidmatgar organization was started in 1929, and I stand for those principles today. My path is, therefore, quite clear. I will not forsake it even if I stand alone in the world."

But the campaign of vilification of Abdul Ghaffar and the Khudai Khidmatgars continued. Nothing daunted, he carried on an untiring campaign to educate and organize public opinion for the realization of his ideal. In February 1948 he decided to go to Karachi to attend the Pakistan Constituent Assembly with the object of removing misunderstanding that had been created with regard to him and the Khudai Khidmatgars among the Muslims of Pakistan by a systematic propaganda of misrepresentation. In a series of statements to the press he clarified his stand as regards Pakhtunistan: "Pakhtunistan would be an autonomous unit in Pakistan. It would stand for Pathans just as Sind stood for Sindhis or the Punjab for the Punjabis and Bengal for Bengalis. The name North-West Frontier Province was a British innovation, and as such it should not continue." He categorically denied as baseless the charge that he wanted to truncate Pakistan by forging an independent sovereign state of Pakhtunistan. The very fact that he would be taking the oath of allegiance to the constitution of Pakistan ought to give a lie to that allegation. Explaining further the rationale of their demand, he said that the Frontier people were backward and belonged mostly to the poor and the middle classes. There was no capitalist class among them, whereas Pakistan was dominated by very rich zamindars, the

capitalists and the upper classes. TheEnglish rulers had not demoralized the Pathans as the Pakistan authorities had dóne now.

He replied in the negative to a question whether there was any connection whatsoever between the Fakir of Ipi and his organization. He emphasized that all reports of this nature were absolutely false.

He denied that there was any link between their organization and Afghanistan over the question of Pakhtunistan. There were no other ties between them and Afghanistan except those of blood. He further denied having any connection with or knowledge of the recent move of the Afghanistan Government for the grant of self-determination to Pathans and in respect of some other questions which had lately arisen between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was purely a matter between these two governments.

Denying emphatically the charge that his demand for Pakhtunistan amounted to provincialism and that it was, therefore, against the spirit of common brotherhood of Islam, Abdul Ghaffar stated: "The essence of Islam is equality and not domination of one by another. We Pathans do not want to usurp the rights of others, nor do we want others to do so. In Pakistan there are four peoples—the Pathans, the Bengalis, the Punjabis and the Sindhis. We are all brothers. What we want is that no one of them should interfere in the affairs of the others. All should enjoy complete autonomy. If one needs and asks for the help of the other, it should be given."

Asked whether that would not weaken Pakistan, he said that on the contrary, it would bring about willing co-operation between the various units. He added: "I told Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to allow the Pathans to become a strong nation for their own defence and for the defence of the Muslims of Pakistan and for the good of humanity. I am a humble servant of humanity."

Asked whether they would now demand a plebiscite on the question of Pakhtunistan and why they had boycotted the referendum, Abdul Ghaffar replied that the referendum had been boycotted because of the wrong issues raised therein and also because of the improper manner of taking it. Now there was no question of having a fresh referendum on that matter which they would try to settle directly with Pakistan.

Asked whether he did not apprehend that after the death of Gandhi the condition of Muslims in India would worsen, he replied: "As long as in India there are alive, at the top, leaders following the principles of Gandhiji such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajendra Prasad and several others, Muslims in India have nothing to fear."

As an illustration of the length to which the persecution could go, he pointed out how in January 1948, a Khudai Khidmatgar youth

had come and stayed with him, carrying a pistol in those days of disorder and trouble to defend himself, if need be. This pistol belonged to the boy's uncle and both he and the boy said that Badshah Khan had nothing to do with the pistol, nor even had any knowledge of it. Still he was convicted and sentenced to a fine of Rs. 2, or in the alternative, to imprisonment till the rising of the court. He refused to pay the fine.

He concluded by reiterating his faith in non-violence: "I am a practical man and will judge things by their results. For the time being my main business will be to wait and watch. In all my actions, I will be wedded to non-violence, which has been the sheet-anchor of my life."

When on the 23rd February 1948 Abdul Ghaffar attended the first session of the Pakistan Parliament at Karachi and took the oath of allegiance to Pakistan, he was invited to tea by Jinnah. Jinnah embraced him and said, "Today I feel that my dream of Pakistan is realized." The next day Abdul Ghaffar was invited for meals, and he and Jinnah were together for a long time discussing the future of Pakistan. Jinnah said he was a constitutional Governor-General and all the parties were the same in his eyes as the Muslim League organization. Abdul Ghaffar invited Jinnah to the Frontier Province and requested him to give him an opportunity to entertain him and introduce the Khudai Khidmatgars. Jinnah accepted the invitation.

All eyes were turned on Abdul Ghaffar when he spoke in Urdu for the first time in Pakistan Parliament on March 5, 1948:

"My purpose in moving this cut motion is to say something before this house regarding the Pakistan administration. I do not mean by the motion to run down the Government of Pakistan nor to pick holes in it. I desire also to throw some light on and remove the misunderstandings created against me and my group by responsible men of this Government and others in Pakistan.

"First of all it is often alleged that I and my group are enemies of Pakistan and we want to destroy it and cut it asunder. I do not want to argue. I may only say so much in this connection that I have thrown enough light on this point in my province whenever I had an opportunity to speak. And still the responsible men of Pakistan have their misgivings as to whether I am a friend or a foe of Pakistan, and that, perhaps, I wish to annihilate Pakistan. But they cannot deny that I have tried now and then to remove such misunderstandings. They are also aware that whenever I had an opportunity to address the people in different parts of our province, I told them clearly that indeed I was of opinion that India should not be divided because today in India we have witnessed the result—thousands and thousands of young and old,

children, men and women, were massacred and ruined. But now that the division has been done, the dispute is over.

"I delivered many speeches against the division of India, but the question is, has anybody listened to me? We said to the Muslim League Government in the Frontier that we offer you a chance to carry on the government. But the treatment meted out to the Pathans by the Government was so bad that it was tolerated only with great difficulty. People used to come to me and ask: 'What do you intend to do since we cannot bear this state of affairs which has been created by Pakistan. We are those who fought against a powerful nation of the world like Britain who wanted to rule us.' I explained to them that the situation is different now. That was a foreign yoke and now the Muslims have their own government. I repeatedly told the Pakistan Government that we are prepared to let you govern. Efforts were made to lead us to an internecine strife, because the war-mongers had thereby hoped that the national and patriotic sentiments would at once be diverted towards it and the constructive work of the government would stop. I realize the danger. You may hold any opinion about me, but I am not a man of destruction but of construction. If you study my life, you will find that I have devoted it for the welfare and progress of our country. I also may add that the Khudai Khidmatgar was a social and not a political movement. But it is a long story, and I do not want to repeat it. Who was responsible for converting this social movement into a political one? The British. Who associated us with the Congress? The British. It is not only here that I am mentioning it but I have done so to high-placed Britishers as God has blessed me with courage.

"We were blamed that the Khudai Khidmatgars do not allow the Government to work out the constructive programme, for such a programme can only proceed when there is peace in the country. But we had proclaimed that if the Government of Pakistan would work for our people and our country, the Khudai Khidmatgars would be with them. I repeat that I am not for destruction of Pakistan. In destruction lies no good for Hindus, Muslims, the Frontier, the Punjab, Bengal or Sind. There is advantage only in construction. I want to tell you categorically that I will not support anybody in destruction. If any constructive programme is before you, if you want to do something constructive for our people, not in theory but in practice, I declare before this house that I and my people are at your service.

"For about seven months I have been watching the administration of Pakistan but I could not find any difference between this administration and that of the British. I may be wrong, but it is the common view. If you go and ask the poor, then my view will be confirmed. It

may be that you can suppress their voice with force. But remember that force or power does not last long; force can merely serve the purpose for the time being. The people will hate you if you use force. Leave it aside, I tell you that there is more corruption today than there was during the British days, and now there is more unrest than there was in the British regime.

"I have come here in the capacity of a friend. Please think over the facts I am placing before you. If you find them useful for Pakistan well and good, otherwise ignore them. Why did we fight against the British? We fought to turn them out, so that the country be ours and we may rule over it. We find today more Englishmen than under the old regime, rather more Englishmen are being called in from outside. Today, unfortunately, we observe the same old policy, the same old method, whether in the Frontier or in the tribal area. We do not see any change in it. Our Hindu brethren have appointed Indian Governors in their provinces, and not only men but a woman also had become a Governor. Were there no Musalmans in Bengal or the Punjab who could become our Governors? The British whom we had turned out have been brought back and are now again on top of us. Is this Islamic fraternity? Would you call it a brotherhood? Is this an Islamic Pakistan? It is not the only evil in the administration but there is another, namely, same ordinances are issued by the Government. That which gives me most pain is to see that when any communique is issued by the Frontier Government it is in the same old language and in the same old spirit as was peculiar to the British Raj. If an Englishman told a lie he was a foreigner. He had not come here for our betterment. He came to exploit us, to achieve his own ends. But I have nothing to complain against the British. I have now a complaint against Pakistan, because they are our brothers and that government is our government.

"We should now leave the old British tactics. If we follow the old methods, Pakistan which we have achieved through many difficulties, would be lost to us.

"There is another thing that I wish to tell you. I have often been charged with infusing among the Pathans a feeling of separate nationality and creating provincialism. In reality, you are the creators of this provincialism. To us the Pathans, these things are unknown. We do not know what provincialism is. It does not exist among the Pathans. Take the case of Sind. Have we created provincialism in Sind? The question is how provincialism is created?"

Ghazanfar Ali Khan intervening said: "We don't believe in provincialism but in Pakistan."

Abdul Ghaffar asked: "Who taught provincialism but the Punjabis?

"It may be that you can misguide people for sometime in the name of Islam but you cannot do that too long," continued Abdul Ghaffar. "It will be a temporary thing. I wish to ask, who created these conditions and why? It is the law of nature that nothing comes into existence without a cause, and consequently such circumstances did not develop *ipso facto*."

Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan said: "They have been created."

Abdul Ghaffar: "I want to tell you that the more you pursue the matter the greater would be the unpleasantness. I do not want to create bitterness. You know my nature. I do not like to make speeches. I am doing so for the first time and that too with the object of acquainting you with my views."

"At the time of his visit to Peshawar," Abdul Ghaffar pointed out, "our Muslim League brothers also put before our Prime Minister the demand for Pakhtunistan. But he said that he wants to unite all the Musalmans from the Khyber to Chittagong. But then what objection can you have against our constituting a belt of all the Pathans who were disunited by the British, and how is it against Islam? We want you to help us to unite all the Pathans."

Firoz Khan Noon remarked: "And you will join Afghanistan!"

Abdul Ghaffar retorted: "We can only join you, not Afghanistan. You have greater claim on us than Afghanistan."

"When it is possible that our Bengali brothers living at a distance of two thousand miles from the Khyber could be one with us, join Pakistan and be our brothers, then why cannot our own brothers, the Pathans, who are so near to us and whom the British disrupted because the union of the Pathans would be a source of danger to them? But you are our brothers, why do you fear us?" asked Abdul Ghaffar.

Liaquat Ali Khan said: "Please, elucidate your point."

Abdul Ghaffar: "What does our Pathanistan mean, I will tell you just now. The people inhabitating this province are called Sindhis and the name of their country is Sind. Similarly, the Punjab or Bengal is the land of the Punjabis or Bengalis. In the same way, there is the North-West Frontier Province. We are one people and ours is a land within Pakistan; we also want that the mere mentioning of the name of the country should convey to the people that it is the land of the Pakhtuns. Is it a sin under the tenets of Islam?"

Liaquat Ali: "Is Pathan a name of a country or of a community?"

Abdul Ghaffar said: "Pathan is the name of the community and we will name the country as Pakhtunistan. I may explain that the people of India used to call us Pathans, and we are called the Afghans by the Persians. Our real name is Pakhtuns. We want Pakhtunistan, and we

want to see all the Pathans on this side of the Durand Line joined and united together in Pakhtunistan. You help us in this. If you argue that Pakistan would be weakened by it, then I would say that Pakistan can never become weak by the creation of a separate political unit. It would become stronger. Most of the difficulties result from lack of confidence, but when there is confidence the difficulties are resolved. Government is run on good faith and not on mistrust.

"The other thing is that we are asked to join the Muslim League. I think that the Muslim League has done its duty. Its work is now over with the achievement of Pakistan. There should be now other parties in our country, organized on economic basis to do away with the existing inequalities. If there be any differences amongst us, we will be able to remove them by discussion. Islam preaches toleration.

"Pakistan is a poor country. Its government should not be like that of the capitalists. We have to find out how to run the state of Pakistan.

"We have before us the great tradition of our early predecessors. Our great religious heads who built the Islamic Empire were only three. Unless we follow these leaders in their spirit of sacrifice and feelings of sympathy, we cannot build our state on solid basis. The name of Hazrat Ali is familiar to you. Whatever he did, was for Islam and the people. It is said that once an opponent of Hazrat Ali spat in his face. Hazrat Ali let him go, as taking his life then would have involved a personal grudge. This should be the spirit. Now, take the life of Hazrat Abu Bakr. He himself got a meagre allowance as a Caliph and fixed an equal amount for all other Musalmans. He maintained that the necessities of life in all cases are the same, and not as you claim that your wants are greater and ours less. Similar was the case with Hazrat Omar. The Muslim empire which lasted so long was built by Abu Bakr and Omar. You may be aware of the fact that even if a poor man dared to criticize him, Hazrat Omar never threatened him and was not angry with him. The Hazrat tried to satisfy him by furnishing the true facts. Under the leadership and the guidance of such men, the Musalmans can never go astray. If you develop the same spirit, then your state can also become equally strong. When he was elected the Caliph and the question of his emolument arose, he said, 'I am a servant of the Musalmans and I should be paid the wages given to any labourer in Medina.' That is why I say that if Pakistan is poor, we should run it on such principle. With its present ways, Pakistan cannot prosper. I will certainly support the Government of Pakistan, if it is run on Islamic principle.

"My idea of Pakistan is that it should be an Azad Pakistan. It should not be under the influence of a particular community or individual. Pakistan should be for all its people; all should enjoy equally and there

should be no exploitation by a handful of people. We want the Government of Pakistan to be in the hands of its people. As far as the technical experts are concerned, Pakistan should send for them from the other countries like America and England. But as regards administration, I cannot agree that Pakistan is devoid of capable men and all are here inefficient. When the Hindus can manage their affairs, why cannot we? Many Englishmen have been retained in service here and fresh ones are coming in. I must say that this will not be for the good of Pakistan."

In a press statement, Abdul Ghaffar gave a long catalogue of the persecutions to which he and the Khudai Khidmatgars were subjected. Pakistan Government had denied having gagged his journal *Pakhtun;* only their District Magistrate had refused to accept the declaration authorizing its continuance after the previous publisher had resigned. "If non-acceptance of a paper's declaration and its consequent enforced discontinuance is not gagging, I wonder what else it is!"

As regards civil liberties, in Mardan district he was not allowed even to have social contacts. When he had to appear in court, section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, was clamped down on the whole area. On the occasion of religious celebrations, the very same section was applied to the whole of Mardan and Peshawar districts. True, the section had for its objective suppression of those who had been agitating for more food. But merely because it affected the Muslim League also, it did not follow that the civil liberties were intact. But, on the contrary, it only aggravated the charge inasmuch as it proved that fundamental liberties of even the Government's own party-men had, in the new set-up, disappeared. Thousands of citizens had been put behind the bars without any legal trial, under section 40 of the Public Safety Ordinance. Could Government furnish its own figures?

Again, he did not know the precise nature of the mechanism devised by the Government to suppress news of the opposition parties. But the fact remained that in two important Khudai Khidmatgar gatherings, though the press representatives were present, the proceedings were not published in any of the newspapers anywhere. "Surely, the press representatives had not taken all that trouble aimlessly."

Such things were quite intelligible when the foreigners ruled over the country. But now that Pakistan had become free and a popular Islamic government was said to have come into existence, it baffled his imagination as to why their provincial government chose to use the same old bureaucratic methods of the foreign imperialists.

A touching incident reported in the press was as follows: "Thirty Khudai Khidmatgars, though themselves poor, have come at their own expense and constituted themselves into Badshah Khan's bodyguards.

They keep a constant vigil by turns with arms, wherever he goes, in order to protect him in the event of an attack on his life."

At a dinner party given in his honour at Karachi, it was remarked by a representative of the minority community of Sind that during the lifetime of Mahatma Gandhi they always went up to him for solving their difficulties, but after his passing away, they would now have to run to Badshah Khan, whom they all "revered next to Mahatmaji". They, therefore, requested him to guide them in the difficult times that lay ahead. In reply, he said that it was the time of test for all. The Khudai Khidmatgars had got their ministry in the Frontier Province, but after some years it was lost to them because the ministry had not served the masses to the extent it should have done. It did not adequately fulfil its pledges to the people. He had warned the Congress Working Committee of this weakness of the Frontier ministry, but matters were not, set right either by the Working Committee or the ministry itself. "Truth and righteousness will ultimately prevail in the world," he said, "and only selfless and devoted leaders can secure the advancement of the country. Only when these qualities manifest themselves in the leaders, both of India and Pakistan, will the road to prosperity open before those countries." Trials and tests were always inflicted by God on mankind, but then only those nations, organizations and individuals who faced them with patience and courage, ultimately, came out successful. At the moment of trial, they must control their anger and have a rigid code of morals and ideals which they must stick to through thick and thin.

To a gathering of Pathans, mostly labourers, he said that the Pathans had for over a quarter of a century been in the vanguard of the battle of freedom against the British, and it was they who had made Pakistan possible. The capitalist class at the head of Pakistan administration feared the Pathans, because they were selfless and ever ready to suffer in the cause of the country. Since the inauguration of Pakistan, he remarked, ordinance rule had been established in the Frontier Province. The Pathans were apprehensive as to their future and wanted to know their exact place in Pakistan. If it was really intended to treat them as equals, then they should be consulted about the form of administration in Pakistan and other matters. In India, the provincial cabinets were consulted about the choice of their Governors, whereas in the Frontier Province an English bureaucrat, disliked by the Pakhtuns, had been inflicted on them.

He describes his eventful three months' stay in Karachi thus:

"After the partition, Ayub Khan's brother, who was a member of the Constituent Assembly, proposed to me that we should both attend Parliament and see what we could do there. His object, I afterwards

found, was to fish in troubled waters for himself. He was subsequently appointed a whip to work against us and was rewarded for his services with a deputy-ministership.

"With Mr. Syed of Sind we founded the Peoples' Party in March 1948. Liaquat Ali, in the course of one of his speeches in Parliament, denounced us as 'Hindus' and 'traitors'. He recited an Urdu couplet which said that they had thought that we had at last become one of them but then they were disappointed to find we were strangers still. In reply, I reiterated that we were Muslims, we were their brothers if they would only recognize us as such, and we were Pakistanis having taken the oath of allegiance to the Pakistani flag. Was it not strange, I asked Liaquat, that those who did not even know the *namaz* and had come to Pakistan as refugees, should question our title to be called the Muslims and Pakistanis? Liaquat Ali tried to brazen it out by saying this was *inquilab*.

"Ghulam Mohammed knew us through our common friend, Dr. M. A. Ansari. He told us that if we joined them, then they would take our nominees in the Central Cabinet and also give us an adequate share in the ambassadorial postings. We refused on the ground of fundamental differences in our respective outlooks.

"At Karachi, Jinnah invited me to lunch with him. After lunch he detained me and took me aside in a room. 'Why don't you work with us?' he asked. I told him that ours was essentially a movement for social reform. He himself had once from the floor of the Central Assembly said the same thing in our defence when the British Government had described ours as a political agitation. It was the British Government, he had said, that had forced us into politics by making it impossible for us to engage in social activity. Where was room for co-operation, I asked, when Liaquat the other day had dubbed us as 'Hindus' and 'traitors'? Jinnah said apologetically that Liaquat's remarks were most improper and uncalled for, for which he was sorry.

"We had sought the co-operation of the Muslim League in our social work. It was only when we had failed with the Muslim League that we approached the Congress. 'I believe,' I said to him, 'that a socially backward people cannot develop a sound political sense, and without a sound political sense there can be no democracy. That is why I am devoting myself to social activity.' Jinnah was deeply moved. He rose from his seat and warmly embraced me and promised to give whatever aid I might require. I told him, 'It is not aid that I need but your confidence and co-operation.'

"He said he had already ordered two lakhs of spinning wheels. He would meet the Khudai Khidmatgars during his forthcoming visit to

the Frontier Province. I should forge ahead with the spinning wheels. I told him that it was easy to make spinning wheels but not so easy to set them going.

"The Constituent Assembly was still in session when I left for the Frontier Province. I told the workers of my meeting with Jinnah and asked them to launch a vigorous programme of constructive work."

In mid-April, 1948, Jinnah paid his first official visit, as Governor-General, to the Frontier Province. Abdul Ghaffar met him and Jinnah asked him about his future programme of work. A meeting of the Khudai Khidmatgars was held on April 18. A resolution was passed which was sent to Jinnah in the form of the following letter:

"The nature of my talk with you has been placed by me before the representatives of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization. They have unanimously decided that they shall spare no effort in strengthening and safeguarding the interests of Pakistan, and they have also agreed that they shall do nothing which may tend to obstruct the work of the Government but will indulge in legitimate criticism."

About his meeting with Jinnah in Peshawar Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"Sir Ambrose Dundas, previously Agent to the Governor-General for Baluchistan, had succeeded Sir George Cunningham who was taken ill. All important posts—the Chief Secretary, the Chief Engineer, the Revenue Commissioner, the Director of the Intelligence Department, etc.—were held by the English and their henchmen. When they learnt that we had come to an understanding with Jinnah, they took fright. Abdul Qaiyum Khan, the Chief Minister, and his coterie of English supporters felt the ground slipping away from under their feet. Unless they did something now, they said to themselves, their day was over. They all joined hands and conspired to create a rift between us two.

"When Jinnah came to the Frontier Province and the question of holding talks with the Khudai Khidmatgars came up, they told him that it would be most unwise to give us a chance. The English officials said that they had given the Khudai Khidmatgar movement only four months' respite with the result that they could not control it afterwards. The only way to render us innocuous was to absorb us in the Muslim League. They also told Jinnah that the Khudai Khidmatgars were a dangerous lot. If he attended any of their meetings, they would take an undue advantage of it and even assassinate him.

"When we approached Jinnah for an appointment, he excused himself on the ground that if he accepted our invitation to an unofficial gathering it might displease others, since he could not possibly accept all such invitations. This was a lame excuse, and as a matter of fact he did afterwards participate in more than one unofficial gathering.

"Sensing the lie of the land we kept aloof from all the functions connected with Jinnah's visit. Being invited to Government House, I met Jinnah there. He asked me how it was that he had not seen me at any of the receptions arranged for him, thereby implying that we had boycotted his visit and insulted him. I answered that a fakir by temperament, I felt out of my element in the banquets and receptions of the rich. Thereupon, Jinnah remarked that the better course for us would be, in the interests of the country, to merge ourselves with the Muslim League. I asked him, 'Do you wish to make use of our services or to render us unfit for any service?'

"Jinnah said, 'Of course, I wish to make use of your services.'

"I replied: 'Then let a Khudai Khidmatgar organization be established with you as its head. It is only through such a body that I can function.'

"Jinnah observed: 'But I have told you that I am with you. I shall agree to anything you might propose. Why should you not then be able to function?'

"I replied: 'I cannot work with these people, the Muslim Leaguers.'

" 'Why not?' Jinnah asked.

"I said, 'They are not sincere, they are self-seekers all, out for loot.'

" 'What is the proof?' Jinnah asked.

"I said: 'Properties of the Hindus worth crores of rupees have been appropriated by them. Has any of them offered to surrender his share of *mal-i-ghanimat* to the public treasury as laid down in the Shariat?'

"Jinnah exclaimed: 'But surely, all of them do not belong to that category! There must be some exceptions.'

" 'Yes,' I said, 'those who did not get an opportunity.'

"Abdul Qaiyum and his coterie next set individuals and groups systematically to poison Jinnah's ears against us. Jinnah was taken in.

"The final move in this game was planned with consumate cunning. Jinnah was to address a public meeting. Abdul Qaiyum planted his agents at strategic points in the gathering with instructions to get up during Jinnah's speech, create disturbance, and then walk out. They acted according to their instructions. Whenever any such individual or group got up, Qaiyum would shout out, 'You *badmash* of Khudai Khidmatgar, why don't you desist?' The trick worked. Jinnah was convinced that the Khudai Khidmatgars were a dangerous lot and were out to kill him. Before he left the Frontier Province he left instructions that the Khudai Khidmatgar organization was to be crushed. Liaquat Ali was given a free hand, including the power to suspend or dismiss at will any Deputy-Commissioner or covenanted officer.

"After Jinnah's departure Ghani informed Dr. Khan Sahib that Sir

G. Cunningham was being brought back as the Governor to suppress the Khudai Khidmatgars. Cunningham advised the authorities not to antagonize the Khudai Khidmatgars, sent for Ghani and tried to persuade him that they should work in collaboration with the Frontier Muslim League. I asked Ghani to tell Cunningham that this was hardly possible. 'Our outlook is constructive, theirs destructive. How can then we work together?' "

Shortly, Abdul Ghaffar returned to Karachi to attend the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. In early May in a press interview he declared that his party would not join the Muslim League wherein the right of individual liberty is not fairly acknowledged. "Apart from the fact that there is a world of difference in outlook and in approach between the Muslim League and the Khudai Khidmatgar organization, I feel pained at the high-handed and impatient attitude adopted by the Muslim League leaders against those who do not see eye to eye with them in their policy and want to rectify the wrong. Prominent League workers of the Frontier are today dubbed as the fifth-columnists simply because they had the courage openly to criticize certain acts of omission and commission of the Frontier ministry. When that is the treatment accorded to the leaders who worked during the Frontier referendum for the establishment of Pakistan, what is the use of the Khudai Khidmatgars, who braved all opposition in the service of the Pakhtun race, in joining the Muslim League today, only to be outcast tomorrow."

On May 13 Abdul Ghaffar announced that he had decided to extend his Khudai Khidmatgar movement to all provinces in Pakistan. His organization of Khudai Khidmatgars would serve as a volunteer corps to the Pakistan People's Party, which had recently been formed and which elected him as its president. It was a non-communal organization, inclusive of progressive sections in Pakistan, and stood for liberal and democratic ideals. Its aims and objects were: "Stabilization and security of Pakistan as a 'Union of the Socialist Republics', drawing its sanctions and authority from the people through their willing consent; provision of full and unimpaired autonomy for all, and cultural relations with neighbouring states, particularly, with the Indian Union."

The formation of the new party was frowned upon by the authorities. Abdul Ghaffar was dubbed as arch disruptionist. "The more I think, the more I find myself unable to understand what the powers that be are heading for," he remarked in a press interview. "They appeal for solidarity and strength of the state in the name of Islam, but at the same time they are pursuing policy of short-sightedness and petty-mindedness towards those of us who are quite at one with them in the fundamental principle of Pakistan's strength and prosperity but who conscientiously

differ from them as regards the method, approach and outlook towards that end. In the sister Dominion of India, before partition, the Hindu Mahasabha and Dr. Ambedkar's Scheduled Castes Federation were deadly opposed to the Congress, but immediately when India attained freedom, all rival parties joined hands, with the result that Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Dr. Ambedkar are now the colleagues of Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, although they have not merged their organizations in the Congress Party in power. As against this, what is happening in Pakistan is utterly unfortunate, and if this continues, not only those Muslim League leaders but the nation itself will have to suffer. I have so many times pledged our loyalty to Pakistan, but still division is being created between Muslims and Muslims by their unfriendly attitude towards my party men. I told them frankly, 'We don't come in the way of your administration, we don't want power, let ministries be your monopoly, allow us to serve our countrymen in our own way.' But even then they would not leave us in peace. The criterion of loyalty towards the state, according to them, is unconditional surrender to one-party rule."

On the conclusion of the Constituent Assembly's session, in the third week of May, 1948, Abdul Ghaffar returned to the Frontier Province to place before the people the programme of Jamiat-ul-Awam or the People's Party. Accompanied by Kazi Atatullah Khan, he started with the villages of Peshawar and Mardan districts.

"I have witnessed the show of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly," he remarked at a mammoth gathering in Mardan. "There is absolutely no difference between the Pakistan leaders and the old British bureaucrats. The most plausible argument which is usually advanced is that the new state is yet in its infancy. I invite them to look to India where the leaders have safely piloted the ship of state despite extremely stormy weather. They have framed their draft constitution, whereas nothing so far has been done in Pakistan. The only conclusion one can draw is that the present leaders of Pakistan are afraid of the democratic set-up. The leaders who have their own axe to grind, consider Pakistan as their personal *jagir*. It is a pity that all of them are refugees and do not originally belong to Pakistan."

He did not spare even Jinnah. "Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, as Governor-General of Pakistan, is not a representative of the Muslim nation. He was appointed by the British King and as such he is responsible to him and not to the nation. I now take this opportunity to bring home to you that Islamic law or the law of the Koran, as you call it, for which you have been crying so long and for which your dear and near ones have laid their lives, would never be enforced in Pakistan."

In conclusion, he said: "I warn you, my Pathan brothers, that you

are partners in the state of Pakistan. You are fully entitled to a one-fourth share. It is up to you now to awake, unite and pledge to achieve what is your due. Unite and act with determination, and thus demolish the sandy walls which the leaders of Pakistan have built around you. We cannot tolerate the present state of affairs any longer. Gird up your loins and march towards your goal of freedom for the Pakhtuns, who have already made great sacrifices and suffered untold privations. We will not rest content till we succeed in establishing Pakhtunistan—rule of the Pakhtuns, by the Pakhtuns, and for the Pakhtuns."

Discontented people started gathering under his banner in large numbers. The Frontier Government got panicky and decided to arrest him. After finishing his tour of the northern districts, he left for the southern districts. On June 15, 1948, he was arrested in the morning near Bahadur Khel in Kohat. He was kept there till the evening, without bread and water. His son, Wali, and two others were also arrested.

Abdul Qaiyum, at a press conference, justifying the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar, accused him of actively planning and fomenting open sedition against the state. His Government had decided to put Abdul Ghaffar behind the bars long ago, when he returned from Karachi and started his tour. But Pakistan Government did not return the N.-W. Frontier Province Safety Ordinance which was sent for the Governor-General's signature, in spite of repeated reminders. His Government wanted to take action against persons who were acting as fifth-columnists.

A summary trial was held in the little mud-plastered rest-house of Banda Daud Shah on the main road to Bannu and Abdul Ghaffar was charged with "sedition" and "intended collaboration with the hostile Fakir of Ipi". The Deputy-Commissioner of Kohat, who was holding the trial, asked him to produce his defence. But beyond saying that he was not guilty, Abdul Ghaffar refused to defend himself. He then was asked if he was willing to furnish security for good behaviour for three years as required under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulations. Abdul Ghaffar replied that he had never given such securities in the past and would not do so now. He was awarded three years' rigorous imprisonment and was sent to Montgomery jail of West Punjab. He was not allowed to take his belongings and see his companions who were accompanying him during this journey.

Prisoner Of Pakistan

1948–54

On July 8, 1948 the N.-W. Frontier Government assumed extraordinary powers to outlaw by ordinance all organizations "objectionable to peace and security". Following upon Abdul Ghaffar's incarceration the rank and file of the Khudai Khidmatgars were subjected to cruel reprisals. Despite his instructions not to court imprisonment, more than one thousand Khudai Khidmatgars went to jail. Some of them courted arrest under emotional excitement by staging demonstration in front of police stations. The biggest reprisal came on August 12, 1948, comparable to the Amritsar massacre. On that day the police opened fire on a gathering of Khudai Khidmatgars for a demonstration in Babra village in Charsadda, converting the maidan in front of that village into a bloody shambles. The number of casualties officially given out were fifteen killed and fifty injured. But according to the reports that came through later, they must have run into hundreds. One eyewitness swore on the Koran that there were two thousand deaths. One of the biggest graveyards in that area is in the neighbourhood of that village today.

According to an eyewitness of the firing which took place in Babra, a strong contingent of the additional police arrived there on August 12. The people of the village had gathered in the mosque and outside to offer prayers. The police objected to the crowd outside and fired on them without warning. The casualties estimated to be about 150 killed and 400 injured. At one stage, about forty women, who were in the mosque and many of whom were wearing miniature copies of the Holy Koran round their necks, came outside and were fired at. The bullets pierced the holy book which these women were carrying. After the firing, the police looted the village, not even one *charpai* was left. During the process of looting the police resorted to indiscriminate firing, in which some children were killed. The villagers who ran to the fields and ditches in panic were not spared. The press was completely silenced and was prevented from publishing the correct statement of facts.

Abdul Ghaffar narrates the Babra happenings as follows:

"About a month and a half after our arrest, while Dr. Khan Sahib was still at large, Khudai Khidmatgars were to assemble at Charsadda for the *juma namaz*. They were to offer prayers for their comrades who had been imprisoned and demand their release. The mosque where they were to assemble was situated on an elevation. They were proceeding

there in an orderly procession, led by an old man. The women were bearing the Koran copies on their heads. Abdul Qaiyum had his troops posted in the mosque. When the procession approached the foot of the elevation, machine-gun fire was opened on them. Under the shower of bullets, the Koran copies were reduced to tatters and blown off the women's heads. Their commander ordered the Khudai Khidmatgars to lie down on the ground. Their bodies were riddled by machine-gun fire as they lay prone. Those who survived were assaulted, while they were performing *namaz*. They were told that they had no right to perform *namaz*, being 'Hindus'. The mosque in which they assembled was dubbed a 'Hindu mosque'. They were stripped, thrown into dirty pools, their beard and moustache on one side of the face were removed, and on the asses's backs they were paraded in the town, besides being subjected to indecent, inhuman tortures and unspeakable humiliation before their women folk. Soon Dr. Khan Sahib and Ghani were arrested."

After the massacre there was a man-hunt of Khudai Khidmatgars in which the military took part. The Khudai Khidmatgars remained peaceful and did not retaliate. In mid-September the Khudai Khidmatgar organization was declared unlawful and Abdul Ghaffar's centre at Sardaryab was attached.

Abdul Qaiyum, in order to keep himself in power, also pounced upon the same Muslim League which secured him the premiership of the province. No sooner had he grasped power than he started a regime of repression, corruption and nepotism. Jinnah issued the stern warning, addressing a public meeting in Peshawar: "Our ministers are under our searchlight, we will X-ray their activities." Jinnah died in September 1948. Abdul Qaiyum became overbold. While giving reasons for the arrests of the Khudai Khidmatgars, he made serious allegations against India. In reply, Prime Minister Nehru declared in the Constituent Assembly on March 19, 1949:

"The attention of the Government has been drawn to the communique issued by the North-West Frontier Government in which various allegations have been made about a plot in which the Red Shirts in the Hazara district are said to be involved. The Government have seen this communique with surprise and great regret. While the communique does not mention the Government of India specifically, the entire wording of the communique insinuates that the Indian Union is a party to some plot against the North-West Frontier Province Government and the Pakistan Government, and it is stated that money has passed from India to the Red Shirts. So far as they are concerned, the Government of India repudiate these allegations . . .

"Government have refrained from expressing any opinion so far in

regard to the very serious happenings in the Frontier Province as well as the tribal areas in the North-West because of their desire not to interfere, in any way, with the internal affairs of other Governments. They have, however, viewed these developments during the past year with increasing concern. It is well known that the Khudai Khidmatgars or the Red Shirts, as they are sometimes called, under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib, played a very notable part in the struggle for the freedom of India from foreign domination. The high integrity, selflessness and patriotism of these leaders have been admired not only all over India but in other parts of the world. They showed a remarkable example of peaceful action, even under the greatest provocation, and set a standard which it was not easy to follow in other parts of India. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan took the doctrine of non-violent action to the brave and warlike Pathans and turned their great energy into peaceful channels. Perturbed by the partition of India, he nevertheless accepted it in all sincerity and also publicly declared his adherence to the new order of things, claiming, however, that the Pathans were entitled to autonomy in regard to their internal affairs. He followed this policy of accepting Pakistan but, at the same time, standing peacefully for the internal freedom of the Pathans, and it is impossible for any person acquainted with this gallant fighter for freedom to believe that he can be associated in any way with any underhand activities. His outstanding qualities are straightforwardness, integrity, courage and a devotion to the cause of his people.

"While the Government and the people of India, having accepted partition and its consequences, loyally abided by these changes and did not interfere with local happenings within Pakistan, it was impossible for them not to take the deepest interest in the fate of some of the bravest and finest soldiers of freedom that India had produced. They were distressed, therefore, at the series of happenings in the N.-W. Frontier Province, during which intense repression took place of the peaceful Khudai Khidmatgars and their leaders were more especially subjected to treatment of a kind which one would not expect any government to mete out. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a man of the highest standing for a generation past in India, has been kept in solitary confinement for over a year and his health has suffered greatly during this period. I do not wish to recount all that has happened in the Frontier Province during the past year and more, but the tale of what has appeared in the newspapers from time to time is a sorry one. We have remained quiet and we have not had any contact with Khudai Khidmatgars or their leaders ever since the partition, but the sufferings of our old comrades of the days of our fight for India's freedom have distressed us exceedingly.

"In the communique issued by the North-West Frontier Province Government, Sheikh Abdullah and Kashmir have been mentioned. It will be remembered that the Frontier Province Government and more particularly its Premier played a very active part in organizing and helping the raiders to enter Kashmir in October 1947 and onwards. In particular it is well known that his activities in regard to Kashmir have been most objectionable.

"In conclusion, I would like to repeat that we regard the communique issued by the North-West Frontier Province Government as unwarranted and unfortunate in its effect on Indo-Pakistan relations which we have been trying to improve."

Protest meetings were held all over India, expressing deep concern about the inhuman treatment meted out to the Khan brothers by the Pakistan Government.

In May the West Punjab Government issued the following press note:

"The West Punjab Government have noted with regret the attempts of certain friends of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who is a detenu in Montgomery jail, to publish imaginary grievances on his behalf.

"The latest of such attempts is a statement to the effect that the Khan is in solitary confinement and that his health is not being looked after properly by the authorities. These complaints are wholly incorrect.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is putting up in a spacious barrack with an attached bath-room and is provided with electric fan, water-tap, separate cooking arrangements and the convict servants for cooking and cleaning the barrack and the yard. The barrack has a court-yard with sufficient land to grow vegetables and flowers. He maintains the garden according to his choice and takes interest in digging and sowing. At his special request arrangements were made to transfer two 'B'-class prisoners from the Haripur jail in the North-West Frontier Province to the Montgomery jail and kept in a separate barrack adjacent to his own. The Khan is allowed to take exercise singly or in company with his associates. Badminton has been provided for him. He is allowed to write four letters a week and supplied with newspapers . . ."

On March 17, 1950, in the course of presenting the budget demand for the Ministry of External Affairs, Nehru said in Parliament: "I have hesitated in the past to refer to many things that were happening in the Frontier Province, because it was not our policy to criticize the internal happenings in Pakistan. But sometimes I have been compelled by circumstances to make some brief reference to the fate of our colleagues there, friends who have played a more important part than most of us in the struggle for India's freedom. So, it would be false of me and somewhat inhuman of me to say or for any one to imagine that we can

forget those people who stood side by side with us for a whole generation in the fight for India's freedom. So we are intimately interested, and it is an abiding regret to us that we can only be interested from a distance and cannot help in the solution of this problem."

There was intense discontent throughout the Frontier Province and the tribal area. The Pakistan Air Force bombed some Pakhtun villages several times from 17th March to 22nd October, 1950. A communique issued in Karachi said: "A large band of raiders from Afghanistan, including Afghan regular troops, crossed into Pakistan on September 30, but when Pakistan troops contacted them, they hastily retreated."

The King of Afghanistan, in his opening speech before the House of Representatives, said: "Although Afghanistan observes the obligations of friendship and has expressed her desire to co-operate with Pakistan, note also must be taken of the freedom-loving aspirations and the repeated protests of the trans-Durand Afghans, and having regard to the principles of justice and the right of these people to their independence, Afghanistan is responsible for the attainment of their oft-desired independence. The Afghan Government has waited patiently and with perseverance in the hope that these problems would be peacefully settled, but so far no satisfactory reply from Pakistan has been received."

Some Pakhtuns had by this time elected their representatives to the first Pakhtun Provisional Parliament, of which the president was the Fakir of Ipi, with a branch in Tirah, under the leadership of the Afridi clan, and another branch in Waziristan, to which a general assembly of some Pakhtun clans had declared their allegiance. Pakhtunistan leaders were men of substantial reputation in their own tribes. The flag of independent Pakhtunistan was hoisted and a declaration by Pakhtunistan National Assembly was published, addressed to all the Pakhtuns, the entire Muslim world, and also the United Nations Organization. This proclamation was also broadcast over Radio Kabul, together with the report of the Afghan Government.

There were rumours about Abdul Ghaffar's death but the Pakistan Government denied them in a press note issued in December 1950. In April 1951 he was taken to Lahore for X-ray. He was suffering from pleurisy. The solitary confinement in the hot climate of the Montgomery jail had told heavily upon him and his health had broke down. He had grown very weak. Feelers were thrown out to find out whether he would be willing to join the Government. "When I had been three years in prison the Superintendent of Jail asked me under instructions from Liaquat Ali Khan whether we would be willing to join the Muslim League Government. We were also asked what our views on partition were, whether it should continue or be undone. With regard to the last

query I answered that as prisoners we did not wish to be dragged into any political controversy. As for joining their Government, I said that while government to them was a means of achieving personal power, we looked upon it only as an instrument of service. How could there be any meeting-ground between us? I was for four years after this kept in detention."

After the expiry of three years' sentence, Abdul Ghaffar was held as a detenu under Bengal Regulation of 1818, the period of his detention being extended for six months each time.

On June 3, 1951 Nehru made a feeling reference to Abdul Ghaffar at Faridabad, when he was asked to perform the naming ceremony of the hospital for the Frontier refugees. He always felt pained, he said, when he remembered that "our old friend and comrade, Badshah Khan," was in prison. He sacrificed his all for the freedom of India. During the British rule he suffered long terms of imprisonment. Now when India and Pakistan were free, Badshah Khan was in jail. This meant only one thing: there was something wanting in that freedom. The British Government also had acted wrongly in putting in jail Mahatma Gandhi. In keeping a man like Badshah Khan behind the bars, the Pakistan Government did not rise in estimation of others. "I feel helpless that we cannot do anything about it. Any government which puts a man like him in prison does a wrong. The Government of Pakistan does not enhance its prestige by keeping a man of his calibre in jail. Those who have had an opportunity of coming in contact with him realize his greatness and nobility. I am confident, wherever he may be, the thought uppermost in his mind is how best to serve his country. Even inside a prison-cell his life cannot be wasted; it is spent in the service of the country. It is but proper for us that we remember him, keep his teachings in the fore and try to follow them. It is fit and proper that the hospital is named after Badshah Khan."

Again in July Nehru paid a tribute to Abdul Ghaffar in his speech at the A.-I.C.C. session at Bangalore: "Our minds naturally go to one of the finest men that India has produced, a great leader in our struggle for freedom and a man whose whole life was dedicated to the struggle and to the service of the common man. This man is Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He and his valiant comrades continue their lives in prison in Pakistan year after year, even though it is said that freedom has come to their country. This is not only significant but also symbolic of the type of freedom which awaits brave and freedom-loving spirits of Pakistan."

The Pakistan Government strongly protested against Prime Minister Nehru's reference to Abdul Ghaffar in his speeches, as "gross interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan". In reply the Government of

India emphatically wrote to Pakistan Government on August 23, 1951:

"The Ministry of External Affairs fails to understand the justification for such a protest. As the Government of Pakistan and its High Commission in India are aware, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a man of heroic mould, and his comrades of the Khudai Khidmatgars were actively and for long associated in the struggle which brought India and Pakistan their freedom, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his comrades shared in the hardships and the sacrifices of that struggle. Indeed, no man probably in undivided India had such a record of sacrifice in the cause of freedom and in the service of the people. Because of this, he was beloved all over undivided India. In his own Frontier Province he was the acknowledged and undoubted leader who had shown his brave people the method of peaceful and effective action. His brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, was another popular and beloved leader of the Frontier Province, who was Prime Minister there till shortly after partition. The people of India revere the memory of these great men. The ministry has no doubt that there are large numbers of people in Pakistan who think of them with affection and gratitude. The fact that the end of their long struggle against imperialist control of their country had not resulted in their own freedom must be a matter of sorrow to all who love freedom and who admire greatness. To claim that these brave men who continue to live in prison, year after year, are not entitled to open manifestations of sympathy by their former comrades and admirers in India, is to deny to human nature both capacity to feel and freedom to express itself. India is a free country, and freedom of expression of opinion is guaranteed by the constitution to everyone of its citizens. Surely, it is not illogical to draw the inference from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's and his comrades' continued imprisonment that in Pakistan if a man with his record of service in the cause of freedom can be kept in prison, year after year, freedom in Pakistan is the exclusive prerogative of those who, for whatever reason, are always willing to express complete agreement with the opinions and actions of those in authority. It may be that those who were themselves not associated in any way with the struggle for freedom or those who opposed it, might not have the same sentiments for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan as the millions in India and Pakistan who participated in this struggle. There are many examples in modern history, of the prominent statesmen having expressed themselves with freedom and vigour regarding the treatment by another friendly government of its political opponents.

"The Government of India are satisfied that in expressing the sentiments attributed to him regarding Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Prime Minister of India not only said nothing to which any legitimate

exception can be taken as interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan or as a violation of international law, but reflected faithfully the overwhelming and deeply felt opinion of the people of India."

In the atmosphere of fanaticism and hate and intrigues in Pakistan, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated at Rawalpindi in October 1951. The Governor-General, Khwaja Nazimuddin, assumed charge as the Prime Minister. Mr. Ghulam Mohammed, the Minister of Finance, was appointed Governor-General.

Kazi Atatullah Khan, the Education Minister in Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry and a close associate of Abdul Ghaffar, who had been under detention for about three years and seven months, died in a hospital at Lahore in February 1952. On March 1, *The Pakistan Times* published the following statement by Mohammed Yahya:

"I interviewed Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the Montgomery jail on February 27, 1952, in the presence of the Superintendent and the Deputy-Superintendent of Jail and a Sub-Inspector of C.I.D. Because a Pakhtu-speaking Sub-Inspector was not available, we were asked to speak in Urdu . . .

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was virtually in solitary confinement for about three months. He had two companions, one of whom was released from the Montgomery jail but was re-arrested in Peshawar and kept in jail there. The other companion, Syed Ashiq Shah, was taken with him to Rawalpindi along with the late Kazi Atatullah Khan. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was taken back to Montgomery alone, and Syed Ashiq Shah was kept in Rawalpindi to keep company with the late Kazi Saheb. Thus, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan remained alone in the Montgomery jail for about three months. During this period he has been cooking his food with his own hands. Now Syed Ashiq Shah has been brought back to Montgomery jail in a serious condition. Abdul Ghaffar Khan is looking after him, nursing him and cooking food for him.

"About eight months ago, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was taken to Lahore for treatment of his teeth, where new sets of teeth were made for him. But before seeing whether the new sets fitted him or not, he was removed from Lahore with the result that the sets hurt his gums and he had to discard them. He is taking his food without any teeth since then.

"The doctor who had examined him at Rawalpindi and those who have now examined him recently in Montgomery jail, have told him that his health has since considerably deteriorated.

"I met Mian Mohammad Mumtaz Khan Daultana, Premier of the Punjab, before interviewing Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The Premier assured me that he would do everything to make jail-life as comfortable as possible for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan."

Abdul Ghaffar underwent a serious operation in the Mayo Hospital at Lahore, in April 1952. Prime Minister Nehru sent him a message of love and good wishes. The Afghan Prime Minister also sent a message of deep concern. Thousands of pilgrims in Mecca offered prayers for the recovery and release from prison of Badshah Khan.

The following resolution was passed by the Indian National Congress at its annual session at Hyderabad in January 1953:

"This Congress has learnt with great concern of the continuing illness of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who has been kept in prison for the last five years. Khan Saheb's memory has been cherished both in India and Pakistan as a man of truth and peace and as one of the bravest and noblest soldiers of freedom, whose life has been a shining example of service and sacrifice and who taught the brave Pathans the way of non-violence and peaceful struggle for the righteous causes. It is a grievous tragedy that the man who helped greatly in bringing freedom to India and Pakistan and whom any nation would have delighted to honour, should become a victim of the very independence that his labours helped to bring. In the days of India's subjection to foreign rule, he spent the best years of his life in the hard prisons of the North-West Frontier Province. The same prisons have claimed him even after independence and not even his continuing and grave illness has brought him release from this unending confinement. This Congress sends its respectful greetings and homage to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan."

Speaking on the resolution, President Nehru explained why the Congress had not passed any resolution on Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan before and was now passing a resolution. He said there was no question of their not remembering Khan Saheb. They gave repeated thought to his continued illness and detention, but they felt that if they passed any resolutions about him, possibly the very purpose in view would not be served. "Our friends in Pakistan have sometimes an extraordinary and wrong way of looking at things. They even dared to accuse a man like Badshah Khan of all manner of intrigues with India. I can tell you that during the last five years I have not and I don't think any of us had the least contact with him. I had not a line from him or a message, because he did not believe in that kind of things. We have been completely cut off and we have not tried in any way to get in touch with him, because we felt any attempt to do so might encourage the Government of Pakistan to nourish their suspicion and perhaps make all kinds of wrong charges against him. We decided in the past not to put forward any resolution, believing, in any event, our love, affection and respect for him was well known. But we now feel that a time has come when we should express ourselves openly and fully on this subject."

Nehru then said that although they had many tragedies, he doubted if there had been anything which caused them greater concern—and to some extent a pricking of the conscience—as the fact that with the advent of independence, while they were in seats of power, Badshah Khan, "one of the bravest and noblest leaders", far from profiting by independence, actually suffered more than he did previously.

Referring to Abdul Ghaffar in his presidential address, Nehru said: "We know that Pakistan was the child of communalism, and the recent report of the Basic Principles Committee of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly makes it clear that the present leaders of Pakistan intend it to be a medieval theocracy, where non-Muslims may perhaps be tolerated but will have no equal or honourable existence. And behind this narrow communal outlook, lies a wider policy which is utterly different from that pursued by us in our country. This is evident in many ways, most noticeably in the fact that one of the bravest soldiers of freedom, peace and reconciliation, has been in prison for about five years. Khan Abdul Ghaffar was not only our great leader but the leader of those also who live in Pakistan now, and his continued incarceration is a tragedy and a portent of the first magnitude. Our hearts go out to him."

In 1953 Sardar Bahadur Khan, Communications Minister of Pakistan, visited Abdul Ghaffar in jail. He told him that the Government was not in favour of his continued incarceration and would like to release him, but was afraid he would never forgive or forget the grave wrongs he and his men had suffered. In reply, Abdul Ghaffar said that as a Khudai Khidmatgar and a votary of non-violence he could never harbour any feeling of retaliation or revenge against anybody. But the authorities need not worry unless they were convinced as to his innocence and felt certain that they had nothing to fear from him.

On January 5, 1954, Radio Pakistan announced that the Pakistan Government had decided to release Abdul Ghaffar Khan from custody. A press note issued in Karachi said: "That on his release Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan will reside in the Punjab. All political detenus, totalling forty-five, are being released and their properties restored to them. The orders to this effect have been issued today."

Cries of "Badshah Khan Zindabad" rent the air outside Rawalpindi prison when Abdul Ghaffar came out of the prison gate, accompanied by Pakistan's Communications Minister, Sardar Bahadur Khan. Soon after, he was admitted into the Military Hospital in Rawalpindi for a medical check-up. Asked if he would resume his politics in the N.-W. Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar said: "I am not a politician, I am a soldier. My job is service to mankind and I shall continue to do that."

The Frontier Chief Minister's orders affected persons detained or

restricted or externed under the Provincial Safety Act and the Frontier Province Regulations. These included Abdul Ghaffar, Dr. Khan Sahib and other prominent Khudai Khidmatgar workers. The Chief Minister explained that he was taking this very important decision in view of the healthy atmosphere prevailing in the Frontier Province and the goodwill that existed among all sections towards one another.

The Congress from its Kalyani session in January 1954 sent its greetings and affectionate regards to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Sahib and Abdus Samad Khan on their partial liberation after long years in prison. Speaking on the occasion, Nehru observed: "I should like to give expression to a feeling which all of you must share, my deep joy at liberation, after long years of prison, of our old comrade and leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, that man of God, who has been for more than a generation a symbol of truth and fearlessness. We rejoice also at the release of our old comrades, Dr. Khan Sahib and Abdus Samad Khan, the two gallant soldiers of freedom, whose sufferings did not end even with the advent of independence. We send them all our greetings, affection and good wishes."

Abdul Ghaffar was released from the Rawalpindi Central Prison but was kept under house arrest in the Circuit House. In a press statement issued on February 6, he complained: "I regret to inform all my kind friends who have written or telegraphed me that I am unable to reply to their kind messages. Although I was permitted to write letters from prison, I am not permitted to do so from here. I thank them through the press as that is the only available means. I should also like to mention that I am still confined within the compound of Circuit House and am not allowed even to visit my friends and relatives in Rawalpindi." From Lahore, on February 25, he stated that he was "still fettered by the shackles of Bengal Regulations". He was not sure whether he would be allowed to attend the sessions of the Constituent Assembly in Karachi in which he represented the Frontier Province.

He was asked whether he could still influence the people of Kashmir, with whom he claimed cordial relations, in favour of Pakistan. Abdul Ghaffar said that in case he intervened now and told Kashmiris to fight for joining Pakistan, he might well be asked: "Who are you and what about yourself? Do you want to take us into detention, which you have suffered yourself?" He said that the Kashmir dispute had now become much more complicated than it was six years ago, when he offered his services for its settlement to the late Mr. Jinnah.

He took pains to bring home to journalists the fact that though he was free to move about in the Rawalpindi Circuit House, he was not yet free to say or do what he liked even in the Punjab.

In March 1954 Abdul Ghaffar was permitted to attend the budget session of the Pakistan Parliament in Karachi. Addressing the house in Urdu on March 20, he said:

"Mr. President, after a long confinement of six years I have got today an opportunity of meeting the members of this house and briefly expressing my views before them. I had no intention of making any speech, because you know that I am a Khudai Khidmatgar and my work is not speech-making but service. Nor did I wish to narrate to you my bitter experiences of the last six years. But there are still some selfish persons in Pakistan who are against me and who are planning and trying to bring me somehow into disrepute. I, therefore, thought it necessary to make a short speech to remove such misunderstanding about me.

"Sir, I have one thing to complain against the Honourable Members of this house as well. You know that I am a member of this house and that this is a sovereign body, and as such its members have some rights and privileges. I was arrested under the Frontier Crimes Regulation, which is applicable to persons guilty of moral offences. I was asked to furnish a security for good conduct which I refused; consequently I was sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. After three years my release was due, but I was kept for four days at Joonga and then I was confined to prison under the Bengal Regulations of 1818, which were promulgated by the East India Company. After full three years and two months of this last imprisonment I was allowed to come out of the jail. But during all this period of my incarceration you did not even ask the Government as to what crime I had committed. You know that I am even now virtually a prisoner. It will not be out of place to mention here that I had to go to prison many a time in the days of the Britishers. Although we were at loggerheads with them, yet their treatment of us in jail was gentlemanly and the British officers there were to some extent tolerant and polite. But the treatment which was meted out to me in this Islamic state of ours was such that I do not even like to mention it to you. The thing which pains me most is that the tolerance and courtesy I found in that foreign nation was lacking in my own brethren and in my own people in Pakistan.

"Six years ago I announced on the floor of this house that Pakistan is our country, and its solidarity and protection is our duty and that any programme that will be submitted by any party for its progress and its reconstruction shall have my fullest co-operation. I repeat those words of mine even today. But still there are some persons who suspect my loyalty. In this connection I would like to state that my whole life was spent in that struggle which has resulted in the formation of Pakistan. If we had not driven the Britishers out or forced them to quit, how could

Pakistan have come into existence? So how can we betray a country for the freedom of which we have suffered so much and have even laid down or lives? I, therefore, think that it would be advisable to set up a tribunal to inquire not only into the question of my loyalty or treason, but also into the general massacre, arson and loot and the dishonouring of women and children and old men at Charsadda and the oppressive treatment meted out to us in jail.

"I believe that for the solidarity of Pakistan, it is necessary that the various sections of its people should mutually trust one another and respect one another's rights, interests and distinctive features. You will perhaps recall that six years ago I had said in this connection that after the establishment of Pakistan, the country had no need for the Muslim League. The recent elections in Bengal have at last proved this contention. You will remember too that I had also submitted the proposal that in this country, the parties should be formed on the economic and social bases. It is a pity that at that time people had viewed us with suspicion and my frank words were considered criminal. I repeat, even now, I hold the same view, and I ask you to think it over coolly.

"I have always believed that the English had destroyed our unity by cutting us, the Pakhtuns, into several parts in order to weaken us. For the solidarity of Pakistan and the mutual confidence amongst its various components, it is necessary to restore that unity by bringing together all those areas, in which the inhabitants are racially and culturally homogenous, into one unit of Pakhtunistan, thereby removing the unnatural divisions imposed by the English. In the same way, the smaller units in West Pakistan should be merged into three or four larger units.

"The people expect me to express my views on the internal and external affairs of the country. But after my continued imprisonment for six years, I am hardly in a position to say anything definite on the subject. I am still virtually a prisoner, for, except for the Punjab, I am not allowed to move into any other part of Pakistan. My Khudai Khidmatgar party, whose one object is to serve mankind, is under a ban; our national paper, the *Pakhtun*, was made to cease publication since the day Pakistan came into being; and our two-storeyed training centre, built at a cost of thousands of rupees, where the Khudai Khidmatgars were trained in social service, has already been razed to the ground.

"There are certain principles, however, about which I would like to say something. You know that I have always been an adherent of non-violence. I regard non-violence as love and violence as hate. I have ever been a law-abiding citizen, and so I want that our country, Pakistan, too should be a peace-loving country and play a peaceful role in the international affairs. I want that we should have friendly relations with all

the countries of the world, whether they belong to this bloc or that bloc, to the East or to the West. And in particular, we must definitely have friendly relations with our neighbours, and if there be any disputes, they must be settled by friendly negotiations and agreement.

"In the end I have only to say that I had expected that every effort will be made to raise the standard of living of the people of Pakistan, but facts seem to belie this expectation. The rich are getting richer, and the poor, poorer. The refugees are in a pitiable plight. There is no civil liberty in the country, people are still detained in jails under the Safety Act and Martial Law, with the result that the gulf between the government and the people is widening. If it is not attended to in time, the consequences are bound to be disastrous."

Abdul Ghaffar attended the Constituent Assembly regularly and took keen interest in the proceedings. On April 8 he moved that consideration of the Basic Principles Committee's Report be postponed. The motion was defeated. Besides the members of the Muslim League he was the only member attending the session. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"I do not want to comment on the speech the Honourable Prime Minister had delivered on the occasion of dismissing the Ministry of Maulvi Fazlul Haq or to discuss the charges he has brought against the former Chief Minister of East Bengal. I would, however, recall that some very serious charges of a like nature were levelled before this by the Government against the others as well. We have before us the case of the North-West Frontier Province where a number of persons were similarly incriminated and lodged in jails for several years. But at last our rulers awoke to the hollowness of the charges and felt sorry for the sentences awarded for the alleged offences, which they subsequently had to admit as baseless.

"I now take up the ticklish question of the riots in East Pakistan. It is extremely embarrassing to speak out one's mind while dealing with this subject. I am a believer in non-violence and hold that violence never pays. It only serves to evoke hatred and makes the confusion worse confounded. Nevertheless, I cannot help remarking that the said happenings in East Pakistan are the direct outcome of the policy you had been following in that part of the country for the last seven years. You gagged public opinion and imprisoned people without trial. You did not care to fill the vacant seats in the provincial legislature and proceeded with the governance of the province in an arbitrary manner without paying any heed to the aspirations of the people, whose goodwill you took for granted. The masses were ruthlessly persecuted and oppressed. Their needs were overlooked and they were subjected to extreme hardships

and oppression. The cumulative effect of all these factors was that the Muslim League could secure no more than a mere nine per cent of the seats in provincial elections and the people of East Pakistan returned a decisive verdict of no-confidence in the Muslim League and its government. But then even this lesson seems to have fallen flat on you, and you are still pursuing the policies calculated to embitter the feelings of the people and creating conditions which are sure to engender mutual suspicion and bickering amongst the various classes. You suppress the legitimate aspirations of the people in general and play off one section against another, and when the matters come to a head, a scapegoat is readily seized and declared responsible for all the troubles. I am afraid the direction in which the events are now drifting in West Pakistan too, points to the results not much happier than what we have recently experienced in the eastern wing of the country.

"I have listened intently to everything said by the Honourable Prime Minister against Maulvi Fazlul Haq and have gone through the various statements published by the Government in this regard. As against these, there is the assurance I had received from Maulvi Fazlul Haq and his ministers, during their last visit to Karachi, to the effect that the secession would be the last thing they could think of. They could not understand why they should sever their connection with the Centre and how the eastern wing could stand to gain by such secession. Added to this, we have the statements of Maulana Bhashani, Shaheed Suhrawardy and others, as reported from time to time in the press. In strange contrast to this, we have detected in certain influential quarters of West Pakistan an undertone of discord which smacks of a separatist move and seems to be designed to rend asunder the two wings of Pakistan. This reading of the situation is confirmed by the demonstrations held in Karachi on the language issue, the slogans raised on the occasion, the malicious propaganda campaign persistently maintained in the Karachi press and the speeches delivered in public meetings. These were some of the devices adopted to create bad blood between the Bengalis and non-Bengalis. I have a lot of other information bearing on this matter, but I do not propose to disclose it here.

"In conclusion, I appeal to the powers-that-be to examine all these questions calmly and coolly and to save the country from the perils involved in the present policy."

Mr. James W. Spain, an American author, who interviewed Abdul Ghaffar in Karachi in 1954, writes in *The Ways of the Pathans*:

"A relative and associate of Abdul Ghaffar was waiting for me inside the hotel courtyard. He took me up to a small room on the third floor and offered to serve as interpreter, saying that Badshah Khan did not

speak English. Outside the door two poorly dressed Pathans sat cross-legged. They regarded me with blank, indifferent eyes and, uncharacteristically, did not respond to my greetings.

"We found Abdul Ghaffar Khan lying on a rumpled bed. Tall and gaunt, he looked like a sick Jeremiah outside the gates of a King of Israel. He wore a simple, long garment of homespun, something like an old-fashioned night-shirt, and his grizzled head was bare. Above his prominent Pathan nose, dark eyes glistened and charged the otherwise dim and dingy room with a sense of urgency. He did not rise but offered hand; he gripped mine so strongly that I was unable to withdraw it and had to slip into the chair pushed gently against the back of my knees by his associate.

"Still holding my hand, he stared into my eyes and asked in Pakhtu, 'What do you want to know about my poor people?'

"I told him I was interested in everything about the Pathans but at the moment, was most interested in himself and his political ideas. I added that while many of the Pathans I had met were poor in material things, I thought them all proud and rich in spirit.

" 'Yes,' he agreed. 'We are proud people despite all the oppression we have suffered, first from the British and now from these *babus* who call themselves Pakistanis. Freedom to live our own lives, that is all we want. Yet they call us traitors and say I am disloyal. I am loyal to my people. That is all I will be loyal to. You Americans should help us, instead of listening only to these people in Karachi,' he added. 'The Russians should help us. We welcome you all.'

" 'Does this freedom you want have to be outside of Pakistan? Can you not be free within Pakistan?' I asked.

" 'This is a matter of no importance,' Ghaffar Khan insisted. 'What matters is that we be free to develop ourselves, to tear down our own Khans who have oppressed us, to make our own laws, and to speak our own language. For this they say I am an agent of Afghanistan. For this they call me traitor. It is false!'

"To my great surprise he had slipped into English after our first few words. His vocabulary seemed not to exceed a few hundred words but he used them with extraordinary force and all the skill of a polished orator. He dropped my hand to spread forth his arms in an impassioned plea for freedom. He took it again to demonstrate the sincerity of his denial of being an Afghan agent. It was easy to imagine the impact he would have, speaking in Pakhtu, on an audience of the Pathans, great admirers of the spoken words."

Crusader

1954–7

UNLIKE neighbouring India, where the constitution of the independent republic came into force in 1950, Pakistan was until 1956 governed by the legislation passed during the colonial period. The discussion of the drafts of a Pakistan constitution began as late as 1950. Acute political conflicts broke out in the course of the drawing up and discussion of the constitution projects. The Muslim League itself was not united on many issues of the future constitutional arrangement. And the interests of the various groups within the governing classes conflicted when the original proposals were submitted in an Interim Report to the Constituent Assembly in September 1950. Basic principles spelled out in these proposals were founded on Liaquat Ali Khan's resolution on the nature of the Pakistan State and the basic civil rights. They envisaged a democratic republic, federal in structure, granting complete autonomy to the constituent administrative units and guaranteeing every Muslim equal opportunities to live his own life in accordance with the injunctions of his faith. Many of these basic principles were, however, all religiously slanted, promoting the theory of a state based on the injunctions of the Holy Koran. The mullahs propagated that since the religious principle had been instrumental in the formation of Pakistan, Pakistan's political system had naturally to be governed by religious precepts. The mullahs wielded great influence over the masses.

When the makers of the constitution began to mould these definitive principles into a concrete constitutional scheme, they could not help betraying their true goals. The greatest differences within the League's parliamentary faction arose over the distribution of the seats among the provinces in the future legislative bodies and over the terms of reference of the central and the provincial governments, and the state language. The East Pakistan deputies, discontended with the domination of the Punjabi landlords, industrialists and officers, levelled strong criticism at the report of the Basic Principles Committee. Because, according to the proposed draft, East Pakistan with more than half of the country's population would not have the corresponding number of seats in the central legislative bodies and also its parliamentary faction in the Constituent Assembly would be no more than a minority group. Urdu, a language foreign to the Bengalis, was to become Pakistan's sole state language. According to the census of 1951, Urdu was the mother tongue

of only twenty-four lakhs of inhabitants or of less than four per cent of the country's population. The discrimination against Bengali, which was the mother tongue of the majority of the population of Pakistan, offended the feelings of the Bengali Muslims.

By imposing Urdu as the "national language", the ruling circles had hoped thereby to bind together East and West Pakistan, to weaken the existing ties between the Bengalis of East and West Bengal and to strike a blow at the national movements of the Bengalis, Pakhtuns, Sindhis and Baluchis. A bitter struggle flared up in Pakistan around the question of state language. The founders of Pakistan, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali, had declared: "Pakistan is a Muslim state and it must have its lingua franca the language of the Muslim nation, and that language can only be Urdu and no other language."

When the Constituent Assembly considered the report of the Basic Principles Committee in September 1954, the plan for the reorganization of the administrative division of West Pakistan, which differed from "one unit" proposal, was carried mainly by the votes of deputies representing East Pakistan and Sind. It envisaged the creation of six provinces in West Pakistan: the Punjab, the North-West Frontier, Sind, Bahawalpur, Khairpur and Baluchistan. But the Punjab leaders of the Muslim League vehemently opposed the decision of the Constituent Assembly, for they considered that it jeopardized the powerful position they held in the country. Mian Mohammad Mumtaz Khan Daultana, Mustaq Ahmed Gurmani and the others asserted that the proposed administrative division of West Pakistan would lead to Pakistan's disintegration and demanded the implementation of the one-unit scheme. The representatives of the landlords of the Punjab and other vested interests thought that if the proposed administrative division was effected, their rule would come to an end. The Prime Minister, Mohammed Ali, energetically campaigned for the one-unit plan and spoke against the danger of provincialism. The Government tried to win over influential leaders like Dr. Khan Sahib for the one-unit proposal and gagged the opposition. Abdul Ghaffar and Maulana Bhashani and several others opposed the one-unit plan and a great struggle ensued.

On October 24, 1954, the Governor-General issued a proclamation announcing that the constitutional machinery had broken down and declaring a state of emergency throughout Pakistan. An eight-member Cabinet with Mohammed Ali as Prime Minister and Ayub Khan as Defence Minister and Dr. Khan Sahib as Cabinet Minister was formed.

On November 22nd, Prime Minister Mohammed Ali in a broadcast announced the Government's decision to unify the whole of West Pakistan into one single administrative unit. Within one week the Legislative

Assemblies of the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and Sind voted in favour of the merging of West Pakistan into one administrative unit. Mr. Mustaq Ahmed Gurmani was sworn as the Governor of the Punjab. Shaheed Suhrawardy was given the portfolio of the Ministry of Law. In December the One Unit Conference of Central ministers, Governors and Chief Ministers was inaugurated by Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed. The conference decided that the administrative structure of unified West Pakistan would follow the normal provincial cabinet in all respects: one governor, one cabinet and one legislature. In April 1955, Mr. Gurmani and Dr. Khan Sahib were appointed as Governor and Chief Minister of West Pakistan Province respectively.

In a statement issued at Rawalpindi in March 1955, Abdul Ghaffar said that the Government had not so far removed the restrictions on his entry into his home province. He had told the Government at the time of his release from jail in January last year that he would prefer confinement in jail to restrictions on his movements. "Either the Government should have faith in me and offer me an opportunity to serve the country or I will prefer to stay in prison. But the government spokesman said then that there was no question of any suspicion; only for certain obligations of their own, the Government wanted to put certain restrictions on my movements, which would be removed completely after two or three months. I have pondered over this and come to the conclusion that my only fault is my firm belief in democracy. When I had a talk with the ministers of the present Government and the previous one on the one-unit proposal, the difference cropped up only in respect of the people's verdict. I said that the matter should be decided after ascertaining the wishes of the people and that the elections should be held in West Pakistan on this issue."

He said that during the past fifteen months, since his release from jail, he did not think any change had taken place in the attitude of the Government towards his party and himself. "The Khudai Khidmatgar organization, which had made sacrifices for the country, is still banned and our national paper, *Pakhtun*, is not allowed to be published despite persistent efforts, and I am under detention as before. I cannot go out of the Punjab to any other province in Pakistan, and even in the Punjab if I want to do some social service to the poor and the helpless people, I am viewed with suspicion. Wherever I go the police follow me, and where I stay they keep sitting outside to keep people away from me. In fact, the work I want to do is considered to be the responsibility of any good government, and our own Government should have assisted me in this noble task. Instead, difficulties are created in my way. After waiting for fifteen months, now I want to remind the Government of

the solemn promise they had made at the time of my release from the Rawalpindi Central Jail."

In a press interview at Lahore on March 25, Abdul Ghaffar bluntly criticized the proposed integration of West Pakistan into one single administrative unit. Disagreeing with his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, he said: "I believe that the existence and the promotion of cultural and linguistic areas do not militate against national unity. The people must be given an opportunity to express themselves on this national issue. We should learn a lesson from the experience of our neighbour, India, where the province of Madras had to be demarcated on linguistic basis to satisfy the aspiration of Telugu-speaking people." He observed that one-unit plan, if forced on the people, would create more provincialism than it sought to curb, and would ultimately weaken Pakistan. He had told some ministers of the Central Government that the plan should not be thrust on the people, and that he would continue to oppose it unless people's opinion was ascertained in a just manner.

Asked if the Frontier Assembly's resolution welcoming the one unit was not indicative of the popular support, Abdul Ghaffar replied that if he were permitted to go to the Frontier, he would show to the world how many were really in favour of the one-unit plan.

One week later he appealed to his critics not to exploit the name of Islam for preaching petty, personal and political ambitions: "Systematic efforts to cause confusion in the public mind as to my stand *vis-a-vis* the welding of West Pakistan Provinces into one unit are being made by a section of the press and the politicians. I have stated unequivocally that the existence of linguistic and cultural entity does not militate against national solidarity. This has been my stand even before the advent of Pakistan. I have consistently stated that the regional autonomy is the only way to eliminate the provincial and parochial bickerings and paving the way for building a democratic and progressive nation on a voluntary basis. Even the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League envisaged autonomous provincial units. My stand on this issue is consistent with my past, and I stick to it."

"This is my personal view," he said. "But I have always maintained that the people are the final arbiters of all the issues, including the one unit. If they want to have one unit, no one should impose the decision upon them from outside. If, as is claimed, the people are unquestionably in favour of one unit, then why should the rulers be afraid of referring this issue to their verdict? I do not like the people to be bypast under any circumstances."

The Pakistani authorities were bent upon giving effect to their one-unit plan. It cut at the very root of the demand of the Pakhtu-speaking

regions into a separate unit. Abdul Ghaffar's opposition to it brought him into collision with the authorities.

In July 1955 the people danced and embraced each other at many places in the Frontier Province as Radio Pakistan interrupted its Pakhtu programme to announce the lifting of the ban on the entry of Abdul Ghaffar into the province. On this unexpected move, he writes:

"Even after seven years they had no wish to set me free. They took me out of detention under the Bengal Regulations and interned me in the Punjab under the Defence Ordinance. I first resided at Wah and then shifted to Chach. One day some press people told me that Iskander Mirza had revealed that the Government intended again to arrest me. Previously the charge against us used to be that we were 'Hindus' and Indian fifth-columnists. That excuse had worn out. I was now to be charged with engaging in conspiracy with Afghanistan.

"In the meantime, Abdul Rashid had succeeded Abdul Qaiyum as the Chief Minister of the North-West Frontier Province. On July 12, 1955, in the course of a speech at Murree on the one-unit scheme, which was then under discussion, he maintained that not a single person was any longer being kept in detention either under the Bengal Regulation or the Defence Ordinance. He was challenged by a Bengali representative, who mentioned me by name. Abdul Rashid, thereupon, said that the Central Government was responsible for my continued internment. As far as they were concerned, they would have welcomed my return to the Frontier Province.

"Iskander Mirza, the Acting-Governor-General, felt that an awkward situation had been created by Abdul Rashid's statement, and finding themselves stripped of the last excuse for the action they had taken, the Central Government cancelled the restrictive orders against me. Abdul Rashid was removed from office not long afterwards."

Abdul Ghaffar who was accompanied in a procession of motor-cars by the Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif, Awami League Leader, was given a royal reception by the villagers all along the route from the Attock Bridge to Jahangira. Cries of "Badshah Khan Zindabad" were raised and he was profusely garlanded. Addressing the first meeting at Jahangira, since his arrest and detention in 1948, he said on July 17, 1955: "You have been through many vicissitudes during the past seven years. This happens in the building of a nation. I am glad that you have come out with the flying colours through all these trials. You are politically awakened people. Your heart is sound. The trouble with you is that you cannot consolidate your gains. You turned out the Britishers and won your independence. But by your selfishness you failed to consolidate the independence and thereby exposed your country to all sorts of miseries:

hunger, ignorance, shortage of cloth and other basic requirements. I had advised you to build your own home, inculcate the spirit of service and give up selfishness and be worthy human beings. It is tragic that you did not heed me and sold your conscience for twopence."

He addressed mass meetings at Nawshera and Pabbi, where he was presented with addresses, assuring him of their full support in all matters. Speaking to the journalists at Peshawar, he asserted that his views on the one-unit plan for West Pakistan had not changed. He then added: "I am not emphasizing the issue at present as negotiations between the Government and myself are still going on and the final outcome may be announced shortly."

When asked whether he still persisted in his demand for Pakhtunistan and what was the difference between the conception of Pakhtunistan as demanded by Afghanistan and himself, he replied that he was not concerned with Afghan demand, but his conception was of a Pakhtunistan province, which would be an integral part of Pakistan.

Speaking in Peshawar, he said: "Service of the people is the supreme aim of my life. Misunderstanding has been created by interested politicians about my political aims. A section of the press has never hesitated to believe and spread that misunderstanding. I bear no ill will against any one and would make an appeal to my countrymen not to misjudge my life's aims or misinterpret my public utterances and attribute things to me that I have never said or done. Pakistan is the land of my birth and its integrity and progress form part of my political faith. I may hold any views on constitutional issues, but that does not entitle any leader, however great, to doubt my loyalty to the country."

From Peshawar, Abdul Ghaffar proceeded to Sardaryab to meet his co-workers. Dr. Khan Sahib visited him there on July 20 and tried in vain to dissuade him from campaigning against one-unit scheme. One morning he visited the Babra village, where he offered prayers for those Khudai Khidmatgars who were killed in the firing in 1948. There he was given a rousing welcome by the people. On the occasion, a moving piece on the Babra massacre, composed by Abdul Malik Fida, a well-known Pakhtu poet, was recited:

> With the shroud under my arms on to the battlefield I march,
> Tarry awhile O Death, I come to embrace you,
> With my head on palms to God's Seat of Judgement I walk on.
> The battlefield resounded Fakhr-e-Afghan,
> Our lives we shall lay down to attain victory for you,
> Here have we gathered for a glimpse of you.

Abdul Ghaffar and hundreds present on the occasion shed tears.

The week-long efforts of Major-General Iskander Mirza, the Interior

Minister, and Dr. Khan Sahib to enlist the support of Abdul Ghaffar ended in failure at Peshawar on July 26th. At a press conference, the Interior Minister accused Abdul Ghaffar of undermining the establishment of strong and stable Pakistan and affirmed that the Government would prevent the revival of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. He asserted that the movement had "endangered peace and order at the inception of the state and may do it again". By removing the restrictions on Abdul Ghaffar, he said, the Government gave him a chance to testify his patriotism. But he regretted that his actions had belied the Government's expectations. He expressed his fear that Abdul Ghaffar and his organization would do all in their power to bring about a conflict between his deluded followers and the Government. "The movement directed against a government, however non-violent, was ultimately directed against something which was people's own." He added that Abdul Ghaffar's actions made one think that he was against the establishment of a strong, stable order in the country and his mental make-up, seemed to be against constructive activity as he had declined a Government offer to assist in the village aid programme. "No Government worth its salt could tolerate the Khudai Khidmatgar movement," he declared and asserted that the Government was determined to implement the one-unit scheme.

Abdul Ghaffar challenged the Pakistan Government to order immediate elections and to fight them on the issue of West Pakistan amalgamation. He would accept the people's verdict. He called the present Constituent Assembly unrepresentative, he would never accept its decision in favour of the one-unit proposal. He demanded the constitution of the new assembly elected fairly and impartially. Those in power did not realize the danger inherent in imposing the one-unit scheme on the people, he said. "It is an irony that those who turned the British out are dubbed as traitors by those who had been the henchmen of Englishmen for generations." He denied that the removal of restrictions on his movement was a special favour. How could that be when barely forty-eight hours earlier the Interior Minister had threatened him with severe action? He refuted Iskander Mirza's allegation that he wanted to bring about a clash between his followers and the Government and affirmed that the Khudai Khidmatgars were wedded to non-violence.

He asserted that provincialism was outside his creed and he looked upon the Punjabis as his brethren. Provincialism, he explained, was the result of the one-unit scheme and was being fanned by certain Punjab papers. He asked the people not to read those poisonous newspapers. He suspected that these papers were carrying on the campaign at the instance of people in power and other interested parties. He warned

that if provincialism would assume serious proportions even before the West Pakistan merger become a reality, one did not know what would be the shape of things afterwards.

He ridiculed the Interior Minister's observation that it was never the Government's policy to restrain a citizen of Pakistan. Out of the eight years of Pakistan's existence, for more than seven years he was either in jail or kept out of the province. What more did the Government want to do with him? he asked.

Those in power swore by democracy, day in and day out, yet they were bent upon achieving their good by the use of force. If democracy meant the people, the people must be consulted before any big decisions were taken. Anything done by force never lasted. Was it a sin to differ with the Government? he asked. Democracy presupposed difference of opinion. Even the Prophet had conceded that. But, unfortunately, in Pakistan differences of opinion amounted to treachery.

Abdul Ghaffar declared that he was convinced that the Pathans as a nation stood to lose from the one-unit scheme. As a people, politically they were the most conscious section of the country's population. The Frontier was the only province where in fair elections they could really have a people's government. That was not the case with the rest of the provinces in Pakistan. In the Punjab, for instance, there would always be the rule of Gurmanis, Noons, Tiwanas and Daultanas. The Punjab, he stressed, politically was so backward that during nineteen months of hard work he could not create even one political worker. Similarly, in Sind the handful of *jagirdars* would continue to dominate the people. He declared that until and unless the Punjab and other parts of West Pakistan acquired the same political consciousness as the Pathans did, it was unfair to merge the Frontier Province into the rest of the western wing. Why should they suffer for a few interested persons? He observed that nobody was to gain from the merger plan except a few interested individuals. The masses of the Punjab would not be benefited in any way. He warned the people in power not to sacrifice the interests of the country for selfish ends.

He gave the assurance that he was prepared to serve the country in any capacity anywhere, provided the one-unit scheme was not forced on the people. He cautioned the Government against the dangers of following the policy of "might is right".

A joint conference of the Frontier Awami League and Khudai Khidmatgars held at Manki Sharif on July 29 gave supreme powers to Abdul Ghaffar and Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif to take suitable steps to resist the implementation of the one-unit scheme. The conference passed six resolutions after seven hours' deliberations. One of the resolutions said:

"The one-unit proposal was not purely an administrative matter but basically a constitutional question, and a verdict on it should be given by the people. And if the West Pakistan merger was brought into being without a referendum, it would not be acceptable." It asserted that the very concept of Pakistan envisaged provincial autonomy; the one-unit proposal ran counter to that promise. "Besides, the people of the Frontier stand to lose both politically and economically by the proposed merger. Forcible implementation of the merger will create suspicion among the people of the smaller provinces and engender hatred." The conference appealed to the people of the Frontier, irrespective of their party affiliations, to unite and get ready for action.

Abdul Ghaffar received enthusiastic response wherever he went. The women offered him ornaments and other valuables to help swell the funds for reconstructing the centre at Sardaryab. Over 20,000 volunteers offered to court imprisonment for resisting the one-unit scheme. The Badshah Khan Reception Committee in Peshawar requested him to accept its invitation to tour the district at the earliest. "In case its request is not accepted, the whole adult population of these 800 villages will march on foot to Sardaryab to pay homage to their political and spiritual leader."

On September 16, having ended his Frontier tour, Abdul Ghaffar announced in Peshawar his intention to start a campaign against the one-unit scheme in Baluchistan. He was invited there by Khan Abdus Samad Khan, the Baluch Gandhi, founder of "Pakhtun Brotherhood". He stated that he had heard of the ban on his entry into Baluchistan but he would defy it. The following day, when Abdul Ghaffar crossed into Baluchistan along with two other companions, he was arrested at the Beltut village, for defying the order. All the three were taken to the Central Jail at Mach and were released on September 26.

Abdul Ghaffar campaigned against the one-unit scheme in Karachi, the Punjab, Bengal and the Frontier Province. In November he said in a public meeting: "I want nothing for myself. I possess everything. My elder brother is the Prime Minister of West Pakistan, and among the Pakhtuns the elder brother is given the position of the father. But then I have dared to disagree with him on the issue of one unit because I see great harm in it for my people." Later he stated: "Dr. Khan Sahib is destroying the Pathans by bribing the Punjabis. We cannot accept such people to represent the nation, who, for the sake of power, are labelling people as honest or dishonest for their own ends."

On June 16, 1956 Abdul Ghaffar was arrested at Shahi Bagh, about eight miles from Utmanzai. His intention was alleged to be to influence the public in a manner prejudicial to the safety and territorial integrity

of Pakistan and to bring into hatred and contempt the Government established by law. He was accused also of having excited disaffection and feelings of enmity and hatred between the various classes of people. Simultaneously, Abdus Samad Khan was arrested at Quetta under the Public Safety Act.

Abdul Ghaffar was brought to Peshawar and lodged in the Haripur jail. Soon after his arrest, the houses of leading workers against the one-unit scheme were searched in Peshawar.

The trial of Abdul Ghaffar, after several postponements, opened on September 3, 1956 in the High Court of West Pakistan, Lahore, before Mr. Justice Shabir Ahmed. The court-room was packed with people, especially from the Frontier Province. The counsel for the prosecution quoted from several public utterances to make his point that Abdul Ghaffar had harped on the subject that the Pathans had been shabbily treated in Pakistan. He charged Abdul Ghaffar with inciting Pathans to violence, "even justifying murders for securing Pakhtunistan". He alleged that the speeches were calculated to create hatred and disaffection among different classes of people so as to menace the stability of the country itself.

On September 6, Abdul Ghaffar submitted before the court a 19-page written statement in Urdu. It read in English thus:

"It is claimed that Pakistan is a democracy based on Islamic principles. In the Hadis Sharif it is mentioned that to speak the word of truth before a despotic king, is the highest form of *jehad*. Being a most obedient follower and servant of the Prophet, I have always tried to keep in view the above motto. The object of my mentioning this Hadis Sharif before your lordship is that at the time of pronouncing judgement, you may keep it in view.

"Before dealing with the allegations of the prosecution, allow me, Sir, to present a few facts about my work, my life and my activities before this learned court.

"In 1907 when I appeared for my matriculation examination, it was the desire of my father that I should go to England and take up engineering course. We are two brothers. One of us, who is now renowned as Dr. Khan Sahib, was in England then and was studying medicine. I was only the son at home. My mother was not prepared to send me to England. In order to please my mother I gave up the idea of going abroad, because I knew that to comply with and respond to mother's wishes is the highest virtue.

"In those days, my people, the Pathans, were steeped in ignorance. There were no schools in our area, and if there was any, the mullahs were opposed to sending children to be educated in those schools. They

thought that those schools were established by the British and that to get education in those schools was un-Islamic.

"Therefore, to spread education, I, in collaboration with some of my colleagues, organized a movement for the establishment of the Islamic schools. As a result we were successful in establishing many schools. In the meantime the Khilafat movement started and as a humble follower of Islam I joined it. During this movement I was sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. At this stage my feeling was that although there were signs of improvement and success in our educational efforts, yet our social conditions continued to be as bad as before.

"After some time I started the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. It was purely a social reform movement and its object was to eradicate evil customs which had crept into our midst. But our movement had not yet even been a few months old when the Government arrested us. This event was very painful to me. The Government resorted to such inhuman methods to crush our movement that I feel ashamed even to mention them here. So the years rolled by.

"In 1930 I found myself interned in Gujrat jail. At that time this jail was meant only for political prisoners of the Punjab. Here one or two of my old colleagues came to see me. They narrated the harrowing tales of atrocities that the British Government were perpetrating on our people. We were shocked to hear this and after consultation with each other we instructed our friends to go to Delhi, Lahore and Simla and contact Muslim League leaders and leaders of other Muslim organizations. We considered them as our Muslim brethren and we had high hopes that they would help us in this critical and distressing situation. After sometime my friends returned and said that the Muslim League leaders were not prepared to help us, because our fight was against the British and these leaders, were not in favour of coming into clash with the British Raj.

"After this, our friends approached the Congress leaders, who told them that if we supported the Congress, they would also be prepared to help us. These were the circumstances under which we formed an alliance with the Congress. Thus due to the British distrust and fear for us, our movement which was a social one, turned into a political movement. Even then there was a lot of difference between the movement of the Khudai Khidmatgars and other contemporary political movements. Our movement, even after becoming political, continued to retain its religious and its spiritual character reflected in its goal of social and economic reform.

"I have mentioned here the circumstances under which we joined the Congress, because even today a section of the Punjab press is busy

defaming us, creating misunderstandings about us by labelling us as Congressites. In order to judge whether we were at fault or the Muslim League, it is necessary to think over the above facts. Alone we could not possibly face the British oppression in the Frontier Province. We needed help. And in the circumstances, when the Muslim League and other Muslim leaders refused to help us, we had no alternative except to form an alliance with the Congress.

"In 1931, when Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded, I and my other colleagues were released. At the end of the same year a session of the Congress Working Committee was held in Simla in which I, too, participated. In Simla a student of some college invited us to lunch in the Cecil Hotel. Sir Firoz Khan Noon, a member of the Punjab Cabinet those days, was also present at this lunch. Sir Firoz told me that by joining the Congress we had betrayed them. I told him that the British Government wanted to crush the Frontier people, and we were unable to face them alone; and therefore, we had no other alternative except to join the Congress. I also told him that in the first instance we had approached the Muslim League for help. We considered the leaders of the Muslim League to be our Muslim brethren and we had hoped that they would come to our rescue. But when they refused to help us, we turned to the Congress for its co-operation. I told Sir Firoz Khan Noon and the other Muslim leaders that if they did not desire the annihilation of Muslims, nothing much was lost. The Muslims of the Punjab and their leaders could still make common cause with us. It was true that we were fed up with slavery to the British and longed for freedom. If the Muslim League leaders were prepared to join the freedom struggle, we were ready to break away from Mahatma Gandhi and resign from the Congress. I told Sir Firoz that then he would have to give up his official position. He said that he would give me his reply after consulting his colleagues. Even today I am waiting for it.

"During the Hindu-Muslim disturbances of 1946, by chance, I met Sir Firoz in Patna. He asked me what were my feelings after the Bihar disturbances. I said my answer was the same as before.

"I was never against the conception of Pakistan, but then my views regarding Pakistan were a bit different. The Muslim homeland of my conception did not admit of the division of the Punjab and Bengal. Besides, I never believed as claimed by many that the League leaders' demand for Pakistan was in all sincerity based on the interests of Muslim masses. To me most of them were stooges of the British. Throughout their life they had not rendered any service to the Muslim people or to the cause of Islam, nor had they offered any sacrifice to achieve these objectives. I knew that they wanted to misguide Muslim masses in the

name of Pakistan and Islam. These leaders wanted to secure Pakistan only for themselves and they succeeded in their design. In my opinion the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims was not because of religion, but it was due to economic factors, and I knew that the British Government had exploited the situation and accentuated this quarrel. I was sure that after the overthrow of the British Government when the country would be free and a national government would be formed with our own people at the helm of affairs, the whole atmosphere would change and our mutual relations would improve. But gradually even after that if strained Hindu-Muslim relations did not improve, then we could part company with the Hindus, and nothing could prevent us from doing so. The Congress had recognized the principle of provincial autonomy and the provinces had a right, if the majority in a certain province decided to secede from the Centre, to do so and become an autonomous state.

"In the North-West Frontier Province the population was mostly Muslim. There we had no quarrel with the Hindus. The Congress used to accept whatever we said, and we did not have to face any opposition from it. Congress leaders admitted that we had made every possible sacrifice for the freedom of the country. At the Simla Conference when differences arose regarding some basic points, I met Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar and told him that Gandhiji was prepared to give more than the legitimate rights to the Muslims, provided Jinnah ceased to oppose the Congress. I myself was prepared to give an assurance for the fulfilment of the demands of the Muslims and guarantee them their rights. Upon this, Sardar Nishtar went to consult Mr. Jinnah and tried to convince him but was not successful, and so the conference failed.

"In united India the number of Muslims was ten crores, and I think such a large number could not be suppressed easily. I was of the view that no power could destroy us, and if any one tried to enslave us, then we would secede from the federation. I was supporting the federal form of government with this consideration in view that if the Congress was prepared to accept our conditions and assure us that the future Government of India would be a socialist republic, the Muslims should join the proposed Indian federation, and in this lay their genuine interest. In my view the greatest attraction for the Muslims under a socialist republic form of government was that as against the Hindus, they as a community, constituted the poorer section. If the Congress was not prepared to agree to these conditions, then in Muslim-majority provinces, after necessary consideration, we would go out of the federation. Even today I believe that in this manner we would have been benefited, because in this scheme there was no room for the division of the Punjab

and Bengal. But the Muslim League leaders of India did not think my proposal worthy of consideration and I was dubbed a Hindu.

"At the time of the creation of India and Pakistan, a frightful tragedy was enacted. Lakhs of people migrated from one country to the other and thousands of innocent people were done to death. It was not an easy task for the Government to cope with the problems created by the migration of such a large number of persons. Most of the people had no shelter and many had to suffer owing to corrupt administration of the refugee camps. No medical facilities were available and very few good people volunteered to look after the sick and the injured. It was during those days a gentleman named Mohammed Husain Atta arrived at my central headquarters at Sardaryab. He was with me in 1942 in jail. He started cursing me and said that if we claim to be Khudai Khidmatgars, we must go to Lahore and share the pains and difficulties of the refugees. I said that I was prepared to serve the refugees but the authorities would not allow me to do so. I asked him to go to Lahore and get permission for the Khudai Khidmatgars to serve the refugees. I further told him that if the authorities allow us to serve the refugees and we failed in our duty, then he had every right to become angry with us. He went to Lahore but after a month he returned unsuccessful and admitted that what I had told him was correct, word for word. He was convinced that the Muslim Leaguers were bent upon running us down in the eyes of the Muslim masses. He admitted that the Muslim League leaders were afraid that if Khudai Khidmatgars were given an opportunity to serve the masses, their own influence would suffer and their campaign against the Khudai Khidmatgars would be defeated.

"After the creation of Pakistan, Sir George Cunningham became the first Governor of my province. He was an energetic and clever British officer. He was counted among the best supporters and trusted friends of the Muslim Leaguers. He was the Governor of my province for the last eight years. He studied the situation and then sent me a message through my son, Ghani, that I should give my consent for forming a coalition government of the Muslim League and Khudai Khidmatgars. I informed him that the Muslim League would never agree to this proposal. We believed in service and reconstruction while the Muslim League aspired mainly for power to rule over the masses. This effort of Sir George failed. I told the Governor that if the League government worked for the welfare of the province, then we would be prepared to co-operate with them even without being in the government. But even this opportunity to serve the people was denied us.

"In 1948, when I first participated in the session of the Pakistan Parliament, I announced that what had happened had happened. Now

that Pakistan was our common homeland, if the party in power was desirous of serving the country, we were prepared to co-operate with them in whatever manner they desired. I further added that I never wanted to put any financial burden on the government and we would meet our own expenses because we did not desire of anything but sincere service to the country. At this moment Liaquat Ali Khan asked me what I meant by Pathanistan. My reply was that the word was not Pathanistan but Pakhtunistan, and it was merely a name. He inquired what was the significance of this expression. I explained that just as the Punjab, Bengal, Sind and Baluchistan were the names of the provinces of Pakistan, Pakhtunistan is also a name of a province in the structural frame of Pakistan. I added that during their reign, in order to weaken us, the British had divided our people and had erased even the name of our region. We appealed to our Pakistani brethren to undo the injustice done to us by the Britishers, unite the Pakhtuns and allow us a name for our province as in the case of the Punjab. Whenever the name of the Punjab occurs, the people knew that it referred to the area where the Punjabis lived. Similarly, reference to Bengal, Sind and Baluchistan brought a picture of those areas to our mind where Bengalis, Sindhis and Baluchis resided. All we wanted was that part of Pakistan where the Pakhtu language is spoken, should be called Pakhtunistan.

"After this speech of mine in the Parliament, Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah invited me to dine with him. After the meal, we were engaged in a long talk. I told him that he was fully aware that the Khudai Khidmatgar movement was a movement of social reform, but the atrocities of the British rulers had turned it into a political one. Now that the country had won its freedom, I was of the opinion that correct political sense could not be created in our people so long as they remained socially backward, because democracy could never flourish among backward people.

"The Quaid-e-Azam was much pleased. He shook hands with me and assured me that he was prepared to give me every help. We arrived at an agreement.

"At the time of my departure from Karachi, the Qaid-e-Azam told me that during his next tour of the Frontier Province he would meet the Red Shirt leaders. He also ordered a few spinning wheels for me and expressed the hope that they would be sent to me as early as possible. We had come to an understanding to follow a programme of social and economic reconstruction among the people. When I reached my province, I enlightened my colleagues of the long talk I had with the Qaid-e-Azam. We decided to give a befitting reception to the Qaid-e-Azam at our central headquarters. When the power-seekers and the English

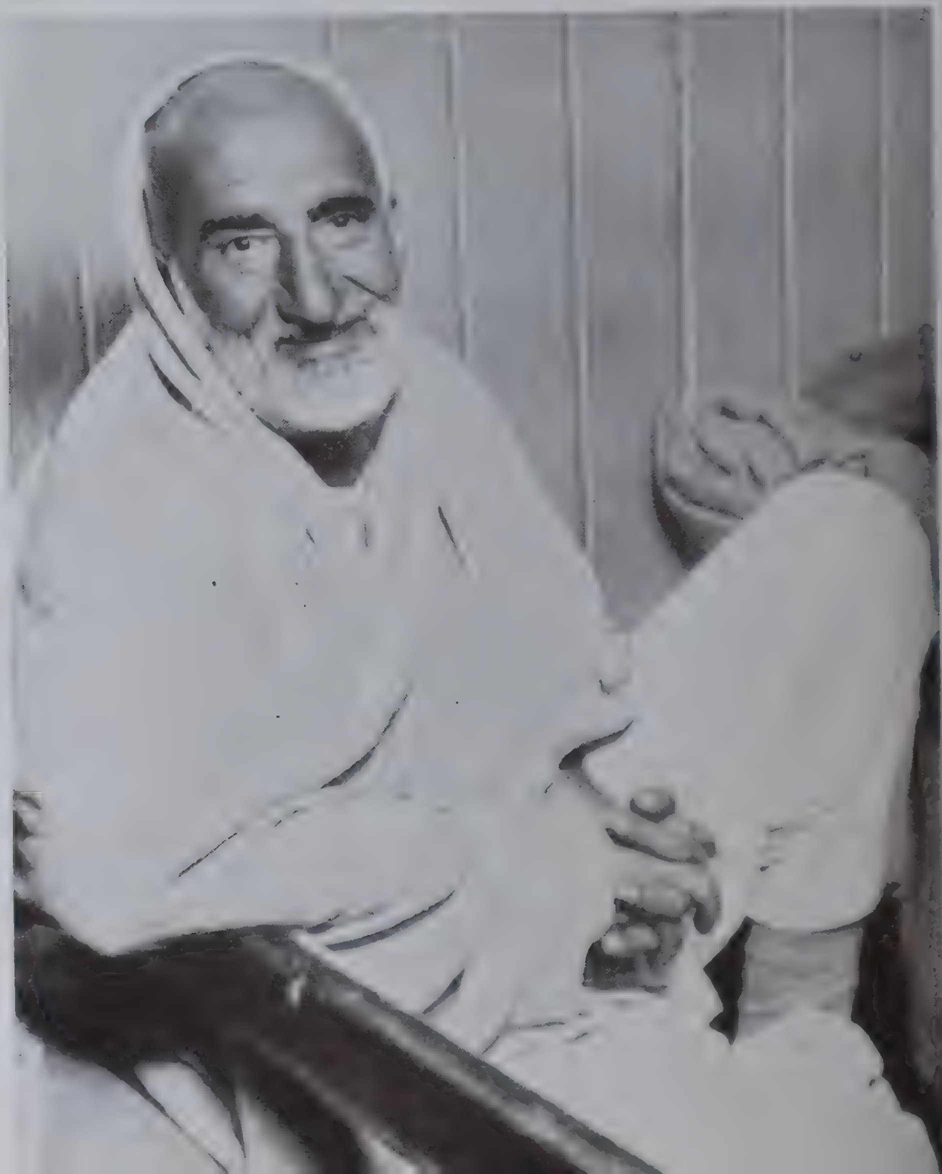


Government of Pakistan

Being sworn in as a member of Pakistan Constituent Assembly, Karachi, 1947



Baluch Gandhi and the Khan brothers after their release from Pakistan jail, 1954



On the train



With his people



Courtesy Khurshedben

With his family members, 1964



In London, 1964

officials came to know about the understanding between the Qaid-e-Azam and Khudai Khidmatgars, they were greatly perturbed. They were at a loss to know all that had happened. They feared that if the Qaid-e-Azam acted in accordance with the understanding made with us, then their fate would be sealed. It would be worth while to mention here that at that time almost all the key posts in my province were still held by the English officers. In the Parliament I had demanded that the governorship and other important posts in various departments which were still held by the English officers must solely be filled by Pakistan nationals. This demand not only annoyed the late Liaquat Ali Khan but also the British officers in my province. So to sabotage the arrangement between Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and the Khudai Khidmatgars, the leaders and British officers joined hands.

"In the meantime, Sir A. D. F. Dundas had succeeded Sir George Cunningham. He sent a special messenger to Karachi to press the Qaid-e-Azam in no case to accept our invitation, because that would enhance the prestige of Khudai Khidmatgars.

"When the Qaid-e-Azam came to the Frontier Province, we were denied the opportunity to meet him. The Muslim Leaguers of the province and the Governor made the Qaid-e-Azam believe that the Khudai Khidmatgars were the most dangerous people; that we had planned to take him to our central headquarters and assassinate him there. We were informed that the Qaid-e-Azam had decided not to take part in any non-official function, although he accepted many invitations to non-official functions later and participated in them.

"Even after rejecting our invitation, he wanted to meet the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Government House at Peshawar. It was decided that on behalf of all the Khudai Khidmatgars I should meet Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. During my two hours' long talk I realized that his colleagues had poisoned his mind against us. I told him that as a Muslim all my strength was his strength, and as he was a Muslim so I considered his strength to be the fountain-head of my strength. At this he requested me to join the Muslim League. I inquired why he so desired, whether he wanted to take work out of me or wished that I should become soulless like the other Muslim Leaguers. A majority of Muslim League leaders were big landlords and *jagirdars* or their friends, and they had never rendered any service to the nation. All their life they had been sycophants and henchmen of the British rulers. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah insisted that I should join Muslim League. I repeated to him that the people who were gathered around him were self-seekers. Whenever their own personal interests demanded, they would ignore even his orders, although he was not only their leader but also the Governor-General.

The Qaid-e-Azam asked me to prove my contention. As proof I told him that the Hindus had left behind properties worth crores of rupees in Pakistan, which had been looted by the Muslim Leaguers. These properties belonged to Pakistan, but in spite of this, these leaders were not prepared to give even a single penny to the government. I invited him to let me know of a single Muslim Leaguer who did not take part in this plunder.

"On further insistence by the Qaid-e-Azam that we should join the League, I said that I would put his proposition to my colleagues. They decided that as we were democracy-loving people and had all along struggled for freedom and democracy, so we were not prepared to dissolve our party at the dictation of some other party.

"It is believed that at the time of his departure from the Frontier Province, the Qaid-e-Azam gave full powers to Abdul Qaiyum Khan and Dundas to crush the Khudai Khidmatgars.

"I had not visited Kohat and Bannu for a long time. As the people desired that I should tour those areas, on 15 June 1948, in the company of Najo and Munir Khan Salars, I left for Bannu. On reaching Bahadur Khel, we saw that the police had blocked the road. I and my companions were asked to get down from our car. Then we were taken to Teri tahsil where during the whole day we were kept without any food and water. In the evening the Deputy-Commissioner of Kohat arrived there. I was produced before him. Immediately he asked me to furnish surety. I asked him what kind of surety he wanted. He said that I was against Pakistan. When I asked for proof, he said that there was no use having any discussion. I refused to furnish the surety, upon which he gave his decision and awarded me three years' rigorous imprisonment. I was not allowed even to meet my waiting friends or to take my clothes and other necessary articles with me and was sent to the Montgomery jail, where I served my sentence. When I had undergone the full term of my sentence, I was detained under the Bengal Regulation of 1818 and was released by January 1954.

"Twice I offered my services in connection with Kashmir, during the lifetime of Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and after his death, but my offer was not accepted. The party-in-power felt that if the Kashmir question was settled through us, it would create goodwill towards us amongst masses and damage to their prestige. The late Liaquat Ali Khan while talking to two of our assembly members, gave a peep into his mind when he said that after the death of the Qaid-e-Azam he did not want any other leader who could sway the masses. On another occasion the Nawab of Mamdot came to see me in the Montgomery jail. We had also a talk on the Kashmir problem and I placed before him some proposals. Hamid

Nizami of *Nawa-i-Waqat* was also present during this talk. I was assured that the Government would sympathetically consider my suggestions but nothing came out of it. Had the Government accepted my proposals, the question of Kashmir would have been settled long ago. My impression is that the big leaders did not desire any settlement of the Kashmir dispute, they were anxious to exploit the situation to safeguard their own position.

"In 1953, when I was still in jail, Sardar Bahadur Khan came to see me in Rawalpindi jail. He admitted that the Government had done a great injustice to the Khudai Khidmatgars and specially Abdul Qaiyum had resorted to oppression and tyranny. No respectable government could justify it. He said that the Central Government did not consider my detention to be lawful and was desirous to release me, but it was afraid that the Khudai Khidmatgars would never forget or forgive the repression which had been meted out to them. I assured him that the Khudai Khidmatgars believed in non-violence and they never tried to take revenge on their oppressors. I expressed my surprise that even after admitting its mistakes, the Government was not prepared to do justice to us. I told Sardar Bahadur Khan that until and unless the Government was fully satisfied about me and our movement, I was not anxious about my release. Later on, he again came and said that the Government had decided to release me.

"After my release from jail in 1954 I was detained in the Rawalpindi Circuit House. I preferred jail detention to the Circuit House detention. I was afraid that, perhaps, some conspiracy had been hatched against me as had been done in the case of Arbab Abdul Ghaffoor Khan who was let out on parole but was re-arrested and a rumour was spread that he was conspiring with the Afghan agents.

"Later on I was allowed to enter the Punjab. Thus I got a chance to participate in deliberations of the Constituent Assembly.

"During these days the one-unit scheme was being hotly discussed. My Punjabi brethren had a grievance against the Bengali brethren on this issue. During that session Chaudhuri Mohammed Ali, Mustaq Ahmed Gurmani, Sardar Bahadur Khan and Firoz Khan Noon, the then Chief Minister of the Punjab, met me and tried to convince me of the benefits of one unit. After talks with the people of Sind, Baluchistan and the N.-W. Frontier Province I was convinced that the people were not in favour of this scheme and that imposition by force of the one unit would not be beneficial to Pakistan. I impressed upon them that at this juncture the formation of one unit would not be beneficial, and that if they were really so serious about this, then it would be better to have two units in West Pakistan, one comprising of the Punjab and the other

of all the remaining smaller provinces. Chaudhuri Mohammed Ali, the present Prime Minister, said that either there would be one unit or the *status quo* should be maintained. Thus, our meeting ended.

"While these issues were under discussion, the Central Government had started negotiations for a compromise with Dr. Khan Sahib through the Governor-General. Ghulam Mohammed had frankly admitted the fact that the Government had done great injustice to the Khudai Khidmatgars and it would be very difficult for them to forget this treatment. He suggested to me to disband our organization and to form a new one. We explained to him that that this was not the correct solution. Great injustice had been meted out not only to the Khudai Khidmatgars but to the entire Pakhtun community. But I assured the Government that we would not only forgive them but, in fact, we had already forgiven. Now it was the duty of the Government to win over the hearts of the people and trust them. Dr. Khan Sahib was requested to explain to the Government that we attached great importance to the Government's trust in the people.

"Moreover, we were anxious to find out whether the Government was prepared to treat us on the basis of equality and comradeship or whether it would give us only an inferior status so that we would have to be be dependent on others. Thirdly, we wanted also to know whether the party in power regarded us as their Muslim brethren. Dr. Khan Sahib suggested to the Governor-General that he should talk to me directly, but other leaders counselled the Governor-General otherwise. These discussions were still going on when a difference arose up between the Punjabi and Bengali politicians on the issue whether after the passing of the constitution and Pakistan being declared a republic, Ghulam Mohammed would become the President. The Bengalis said that the issue would be settled at appropriate time by a vote of the Parliament. When the differences between the two groups came to the surface, the Bengali members of Parliament threatened to withdraw their support to the proposal for one unit.

"As a result the one-unit scheme could not be pushed through Parliament and an alternative scheme for the regional federation was put forward. A meeting was held at the residence of Sardar Bahadur Khan in which Sardar Asad Jan, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Sardar Bahadur Khan and myself participated. After prolonged discussion I expressed my willingness to accept the formula of regional federation on condition that all the Pakhtun areas which had been divided by the British should be merged into one unit and an appropriate name given to it. In India the Britishers considered the Marathas and the Pathans to be important and dangerous martial communities, and therefore, in order to weaken

them the British had split them and merged them with various adjoining units. But now in India all the Marathas have been re-united, and there was no reason why Pakistan which claimed to be a Muslim democracy should not be prepared to bring together all the Pathans in one unit. Our demand is that the Pathan areas should be united. We sincerely assure you that we are true Pakistanis and are the brethren of other Pakistanis. In spite of this assurance some newspapers and leaders insist upon branding us as traitors. We, the Pakhtuns, are scattered in various areas and restrictions are imposed upon our movement and free association. We resent this attitude and submit that a strong Pakistan cannot be established so long as the Pakhtuns are divided and scattered. Only by doing justice to the Pakhtuns can the solidarity of Pakistanis be assured and the ambition of Pakistan's greatness realized.

"Parliament was unable to accept the scheme of regional federation because our Bengali brethren did not support it. So, the Punjabi leaders of Parliament had to consider another formula. By that time agreement had been reached about the form of the constitution. Only the provincial structure of West Pakistan remained to be determined. The then Prime Minister, Mohammed Ali of Bogra, had to go to America. Before his departure he announced that on his return the constitution would be completed and Pakistan would be declared to be a republic before the close of the year. But when the Prime Minister returned, the Parliament was dissolved and the whole country was thrown into a state of suspense.

"When the new Cabinet was constituted, Dr. Khan Sahib was invited to join it. I was not in favour of his joining it. I was of the opinion that by joining the Cabinet he would not be able to do any useful work for the country. He, on the contrary, thought that he would be able to induce others to serve Pakistan selflessly. In case of failure he could resign. The one-unit proposal was again taken up. I was invited to a meeting at the residence of Sardar Bahadur Khan. Dr. Khan Sahib, Major-General Iskander Mirza and Sardar Abdul Rashid Khan, the then Premier of the Frontier Province, took part in the talks. I warned them that they should not force the one-unit scheme on the people without eliciting their opinion. As far as I remember, it was decided that before putting into operation the one-unit scheme, the people would be consulted. I came out of the meeting with Mirza Saheb. He said that our co-operation was needed. I told him that if he and others in power genuinely desired it, I was prepared to co-operate.

"I returned to the Punjab from Karachi, because my movements were restricted to this province. I took up residence in the village Ghor Ghashi of the Campbellpur district. People from the Frontier Province

used to come to this village to meet me. They abhorred the restrictions imposed by the Government on our organization's activities, our newspapers and upon us. Disappointed in securing the justice through the normal avenues, some people wanted to start a movement of civil disobedience. But I advised them that as Khudai Khidmatgars we should bear all ills and hold ourselves in patience for some time more. In the meantime the new Parliament came into existence and its first session was called at Murree.

"In summer of 1955, during the Murree session of the new Parliament, sharp differences again cropped up between the politicians of the Punjab and Bengal. The ban on my entry into the Frontier Province was still continuing and in the secret document which was distributed by Mr. Daultana it was said that if any compromise was made with me, possibilities of introducing one-unit plan would again be endangered. However, during the Murree session of Parliament, I was allowed to enter the Frontier Province under dramatic circumstances.

"Before departure from Murree, another meeting took place between me and the ministers in the Government House at Murree. Gurmani explained to me the plan of one unit, and I told him that in my view there was no reason for the enforcement of that scheme. Gurmani then stressed the need of unified control over the water resources, electricity, mines, transport and administration of big industries. I put forth the plea that all those objects could very well be achieved through the regional federation scheme for West Pakistan. I contended that one-unit plan was harmful to the national interests of Pakistan. Provincial sentiment should be respected and various cultures protected. I also said that politically the people of the Punjab and Sind and Baluchistan were less progressive than the people of the N.-W. Frontier Province. I was of the opinion that with the exception the Frontier Province, in all other provinces of West Pakistan, the conservative *jagirdars* would be returned to the assembly at an election. But, in the Frontier Province where the *jagirdars* had lost their power to a great extent, mostly progressive people would be returned. I stressed that if an assembly was set up for the whole of West Pakistan, it would be more conservative than the assembly fairly elected for the Frontier Province. Thus, the plan of one unit would impose a conservative regime on the Pathan areas. I, therefore, proposed that extensive and active political work should be taken up in the Punjab.

"When I did not agree with the plan of one unit and stressed the need for extensive political work in the country, Chaudhuri Mohammed Ali, the then Finance Minister, placed before me his scheme for village uplift and invited me to head its administration. I agreed to do so on the

condition that one-unit issue was settled in a just way first. Suhrawardy also stressed the importance of village uplift. He told me that nothing big could be achieved without the active help of the Government. So we dispersed without reaching any decision on the one-unit plan.

"When I returned to the Frontier Province, one unit was still under consideration. General Iskander Mirza and Dr. Khan Sahib both came on a tour of our province. We all were the guests of Khan Qurban Ali Khan. General Mirza gave me the details of the plan of village uplift about which Chaudhuri Mohammed Ali had already talked to me at Murree. He invited me to take up the administration of this work. I replied that until the issue of one unit was settled to our satisfaction, I could not agree to take charge of the official scheme of village uplift. At this General Mirza told me that the one-unit plan had become a matter of prestige for Pakistan. If at that stage Pakistan resiled from its stand on that scheme its prestige would suffer and the prestige of Afghanistan would increase. I said the matter of establishment or non-establishment of one unit was a domestic issue of Pakistan and what the Afghans thought of it should not be given any importance. I advanced the plea that if Pathans were happy and united in Pakistan, Pakistan would be strong and happy. Moreover, if the Pakhtun areas were demarcated as a separate unit according to the wishes of the people all foreign propaganda against Pakistan would be nullified.

"I told General Mirza and Dr. Khan Sahib that they themselves had been carrying on active propaganda in support of the one-unit scheme but although Pakistan was a democratic country, we were not given this freedom. Both of them agreed that my stand was correct and I had a right to put my viewpoint before the people. In this way, with the agreement and support of both of them I started on my tour for the political education of the people, so that correct decisions could be arrived at through appropriate democratic means.

"My Lord, had I desired to create hatred against the Government, then there was sufficient material for a revolt in the oppression to which our people have been subjected. But I, on the contrary, have always preached the doctrine of non-violence and have even declared that we have forgiven those who have done injustice to us and insulted us. In normal conditions no Pathan could either forget it or forgive it.

"We consider the Punjabis, Bengalis, Sindhis and Baluchis to be our Muslim and Pakistani brethren. I do not hate even those who are responsible for the destruction of the autonomy of the Frontier Province. Personally I have no reason to hate the Punjabis, nor I hate them. No responsibility rests on the people of the Punjab for imposing the one-unit plan on us, about which they had not even been consulted.

"I have always been a true Muslim and a patriot. Since the establishment of Pakistan I have tried to serve Pakistan and to strengthen it. I claim that if the Pakhtuns residing in Pakistan are united, Pakistan will become stronger. I believe that the secret of the greatness of Pakistan truly lies in undoing the injustice done to the Pakhtuns by the Britishers by dividing them — not in following their policies, but in bringing the Pathans together and forming them in one unit.

"After explaining my political stand I leave the whole matter to Your Lordship. In my speeches against one unit I said what I considered to be my duty and right as a free citizen of a country which claims to be an Islamic democracy. Nothing can prevent me from demanding that, whatever injustices the Britishers have done to the Pakhtuns should now be undone. If Your Lordship arrives at the decision that by disobeying the orders of the Government I have done harm to the people of my country, I shall with pleasure and without hatred towards anyone undergo the punishment which may be inflicted on me according to the demands of justice."

After prolonged proceedings, Justice Shabir Ahmed delivered judgement on January 24, 1957. Abdul Ghaffar was sentenced to imprisonment till the rising of the court and to pay a fine of Rs. 14,000. On his refusal to pay the fine, orders were issued for the realization of the fine by confiscation of his property. The judge expressed the hope that the accused "will henceforth desist from indulging in activities which have a tendency to malign the country of which he is a citizen."

Prisoner Of The Year

1957–64

ABDUL GHAFFAR was adamantly opposed to the one-unit scheme and attempted in every possible way to prevent the merger of his beloved Frontier with the rest of West Pakistan. On January 27, 1957 he announced his decision to join the Pakistan National Party, which was formed with the merger of six opposition parties. He urged that early general elections were necessary for restoring healthy political life in the country. He offered his services for launching a campaign to force the Government to hold early general elections. He said that there was only one way to secure the political foundations of Pakistan: giving the people their fair share in the government of the country. "Were you consulted when your rulers amalgamated West Pakistan?" he asked and then himself gave the answer: "No, you were not. I want to compel the Government to let the people have their voice and that this voice should always be consulted before any decisions are taken."

Abdul Ghaffar's vigorous campaign against the one-unit proposal electrified all political parties. He toured all over Pakistan. Manifestations in the form of mass meetings, demonstrations and hartals by the National Party, which demanded the creation of zonal federation on the linguistic basis in West Pakistan, became so widespread that even the leaders of the Muslim League and the originators of one unit had to take note of them. Hoping that the wave of discontent with the enforced unification of West Pakistan would sweep them again in power, they tried to utilize the tense situation to re-establish their lost influence. With this aim in view, the members of the Muslim League Parliamentary Party tabled a motion in the Legislative Assembly of West Pakistan proposing that the united province of West Pakistan should be superseded by a zonal federation of autonomous units. In September 1957 the West Pakistan Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority a resolution favouring dismembering of the West Pakistan Province into four or more provinces. President Iskander Mirza issued a statement rejecting the proposal. He stated that he had discussed the problems with Prime Minister Suhrawardy and had come to the decision that there should be no tampering with the constitution on such important issues at that juncture and that the first general elections, scheduled to be held in 1958, must be held under the existing constitution. By order of the President the session of the Legislative Assembly was adjourned

and the President's rule imposed on West Pakistan. The functions of the Government were taken over by the Governor, Mr. Gurmani, who was a strong advocate of a unified West Pakistan. A sign of the deepening crisis was the dismissal of Dr. Khan Sahib, the Chief Minister of West Pakistan, on July 7, 1957.

At a conference in Dacca in July 1957, Abdul Ghaffar, Maulana Bhashani, G. M. Syed and Mian Iftikharuddin formed the National Awami Party, a democratic organization covering the whole of Pakistan. It led to the fall of the Suhrawardy government in October 1957. On the basis of an understanding between the Republican Party and Muslim League party a new coalition government was formed by Mr. Chundrigar. He too had to go within a month. His successor, Sir Firoz Khan Noon, lasted hardly a year. The government crisis which recurred with increasing frequency, was a sign of disagreements within the ruling camp and of factional strife. The murder of Dr. Khan Sahib, the leader of the Republican Party, on May 9, 1958, was a further symptom of the tense political situation in West Pakistan.

In his first public address after the assassination of his elder brother in Lahore, Abdul Ghaffar said on May 19 that he felt that Dr. Khan Sahib had been done to death by those people for whom he had forsaken his own people, discarded his party and thrown to the winds the position he held as a result of a glorious political career. He could not explain to himself how Dr. Khan Sahib could have been killed by those people. He would watch and see what the police and the Government were doing with the investigation. He emphasized that the murder of Dr. Khan Sahib had greatly accentuated a feeling of hatred between the Pathans and the Punjabis, and appealed to all sections of Pakistanis to create better understanding between them. He warned that if the present trend continued, it would become difficult for the Punjabis and the Pathans to walk along a common road. It was now time that the Pathans, the Punjabis and other sections of Pakistanis thought over the growing distrust and hatred amongst them and did something by way of effective remedy.

In a pamphlet published in Pakhtu in 1958, Abdul Ghaffar exposed the diabolical plot behind the one-unit scheme:

"Pakhtun brothers—I consider myself as your servant. In all the problems that confront the nation and the community I take into consideration your welfare, unmindful of the difficulties and miseries I may have to undergo myself. If you look to history, you will realize that you were once a great power, you ruled India and Iran. But as you discarded brotherhood, community life, love, unity and patriotism, and became selfish, not only your empire crumbled but your authority in

your own land was lost. You became the slaves of the Moguls, the Sikhs and the British.

"In the recent past the Britishers, by their policy of divide and rule, dominated over all India and then turned their attention towards us, the Pakhtuns, and tried to dominate us with the help of traitors. They snatched a part of our country but could not occupy the whole of it because of the brave resistance from the Pakhtuns. A major part of our land remained independent in spite of the great might of the Britishers over whose empire the sun never sets. And even the occupied part of our land did not cease to resist the Britishers. Ultimately, the Pakhtuns developed the spirit of love and brotherhood and patriotism and they united together under the banner of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement to serve the people in the name of God. They underwent hardships, miseries and sacrifices, and successfully ended the British domination. The British were aware of the Pakhtun strength, which is evident from the policy they pursued in their last days. They were convinced that if the Pakhtuns were united through brotherhood and community life, no power on earth could subdue them. And, therefore, the British divided the Pakhtuns in bits and erased the fair name of our land, and at the time of their departure they handed us over to their stooges, who had nothing to do with the struggle for freedom and whose forefathers had always helped the British and betrayed the country, community and Islam. They had even instructed their stooges to suppress the Pakhtuns in order to dominate over their land. Even after their departure and the achievement of independence, we have not yet tasted the fruits of freedom because those to whom the power was transferred had nothing to do with Pakistan, had no love for the community and no sympathy with Islam. Their only ambition is to rule the country and, therefore, they consider the servant of the nation and the enemy of the British as their own enemy. Their dealings with the patriots are even worse than those of the British. Thousands of people are imprisoned without any trial or reason. Innocent children, women, old men, young girls and boys have been shot down, homes destroyed, women's honour violated, property confiscated and the Pakhtun children reduced to destitution, and this is done in the name of Islam.

"In the beginning some people thought that the target for attack of the Pakistani rulers was only the Khudai Khidmatgar organization, but soon they came to realize that the whole Pakhtun community was to be humiliated at the hands of the Pakistani rulers. When the rulers did not succeed in crushing the Pakhtu spirit, like a magician they brought out from their armoury the one-unit plan. In the beginning they tried to have parliamentary sanction for one unit and also approached me

through jirga and otherwise to support them. When one-unit bill could not be passed in Parliament, they tried to form the zonal federation. And when again they were defeated, the Governor-General, Ghulam Mohammed, dissolved Parliament, scrapping the constitution which was drafted with great difficulty during the eight years. The strange thing was that the Pakistan Parliament was in existence when the constitution was not there, whereas after its drafting Parliament was scrapped along with its constitution. Now the new Parliament, a creation of the rulers' sweet will, gave its first sanction to one unit. The vital function of Parliament, namely, the making of constitution, was set aside.

"The main reason behind all this becomes clear after the perusal of the secret document entitled "one-unit plan", the authors of which are Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed, the former Prime Minister Mohammed Ali, Mumtaz Daultana, Gurmani and other prominent Punjabis. Extracts from this secret document I am citing here for the benefit of the Pakhtun community. We are indebted to Sardar Abdul Rashid Khan, the Chief Minister of the North-West Frontier Province, for producing the document in Parliament and alerting the community against this dreadful conspiracy. The Muslim Leaguers often talk of the national unity and integration, but the following few extracts from the secret document show how far they believe in them.

"Under 'Why One Unit', the secret document states on page 2: 'The geographical and administrative difficulties for a link between East and West Pakistan are considerable. The division of Pakistan by its far-flung eastern and western wings have created for Pakistan insurmountable difficulties. The thousand-mile distance between East Pakistan and West Pakistan is wedged by the Hindus. Likewise, the two wings speak different languages. The eastern wing has bigger population but lesser sources of income, whereas the western wing has lesser population but larger area and bigger sources of income. The two wings require different types of administration. These difficult problems cannot be solved by speeches; the difficulties are fundamental and real. Under these circumstances the two wings will harbour suspicion against one another and nothing will be achieved.'

"If, according to their logic, there are difficulties in bringing together Bengal and West Pakistan, we want to know whether the difficulties are there or not in integrating different provinces of West Pakistan speaking different languages.

"The secret document says on page 4 and page 5: 'The Pakhtuns have electricity, Baluchistan has mineral wealth and Sind has vast agricultural land. It is necessary that the Punjab should benefit from the electricity in the N.-W. Frontier. Exploitation of the mineral wealth of

Baluchistan and the tribal territory will bring equality in the common life. The tribesmen can be settled on the agricultural lands in Sind and Bahawalpur, and this is already being done. But, of course, here are difficulties also and it will require considerable time. This needs to be expedited in an organized way. And all this cannot be achieved unless the provinces are undone. The provinces are so formed that only one of them is self-sufficient and the rest depend on one another. It is a life-long connection like that of a money-lender and a debtor.'

"In the light of this quotation it is clear that the scheme is hatched for the electricity of the N.-W. Frontier Province, the mineral wealth of Baluchistan and the land of Sind.

"On page 7 the secret document says: 'The present position is that all real power lies with the Central Government in which Bengal has the dominating share, whereas we have very little share in it. When there is one unit, the authority will be equally shared by the eastern and the western wings of Pakistan. Thus for the first time West Pakistan will have ample authority. At present, Bengal is drawing more money for its expenses than its contribution towards the centre. But, with the formation of one unit of West Pakistan in the federal government this burden of expenses over Bengal will be lightened to a great extent.'

"On page 9, under 'how the one unit should be formed', the document says: 'First we must work to achieve political power, and for that we must put an end to all opposition so that all the obstacles in our way will be cleared. We must create such an atmosphere that the people will hear only our voice, and this is possible if we use our political power ruthlessly. And if we do not suppress the opposition totally within a very short time and strengthen our political position while the opposition is silenced, it will be dangerous to start work of achieving the political power. Any hesitation and empty threats will come in the way of achieving real political power.'

"On page 10 the document states: 'The enthusiasm at the time of formation of Pakistan is now lacking. The old tactics of subjugating the people are no more adequate. Great disappointment and unrest prevail among the people, and, therefore, the people can now be driven in any direction. This is the opportune time for taking action. God knows, if such an opportunity we can ever get. We can make the people follow us only if we create a situation in which only our voice will be heard.'

"On page 11, the secret document underlines: 'For this purpose we should have our own men in every province and should strengthen and invest them with full powers, so that they can deal with the situation effectively. We must take a lesson from the Khairpur incident in which the assembly there rejected one-unit measure, putting a big obstacle

in our way. We should never trust the provincial assemblies, but we can consult them after drafting the proposal ourselves and get it adopted under our whip. We should get the favourable statements broadcast by eminent people and organize the press propaganda ourselves. We should widely propagate through pamphlets and posters, and we should enlist lawyers, doctors, teachers and students.'

"On page 12 the document says: 'For propagating one unit we must utilize the services of the mullahs also. But we must be cautious, because they are unpredictable. While doing the entrusted work they will bring in irrelevant things of their own interest, having no connection with our objective, and thus they will try to establish their own supremacy. Therefore, we should recruit only mercenary mullahs. It is necessary to arrange public meetings at which prepared speeches will be delivered without changing a single word.'

"On page 13, the document cautions: 'At present we should not lay stress on the support of one unit in the Punjab, as it will scare the people of the smaller provinces and make them suspicious. Our leaders must be careful in issuing statements. We should not appear as claimants, then we will be presumed to be exploiters. But remember, for this work we have able and dependable political workers only in the Punjab and they should be organized and be ready to reach anywhere when needed. From now on the Punjabi leadership should organize itself to take full advantage of the situation at the opportune time. All the resolutions to be passed in the Punjab should be drafted in Karachi.'

"On page 14 the document states: 'Under one unit the population of the Punjab will be 56 per cent, and the population of the rest of the unit will be 44 per cent.'

"On page 21 the document says: 'It should be made clear to every-one that the Centre wants to form one unit. People like Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur should be given no opportunity to oppose our plan. We should direct our attention to the group of Bengalis, who always oppose us and are disposed not to benefit themselves, nor allow the others to benefit. Their sole aim is to dislodge the present government.'

"On page 22 the document says: 'Everything has gone wrong in the Frontier Province. Sardar Abdul Rashid and the old Muslim Leaguers would surely have supported the one unit as Qaiyum's fall has cleared their way. Qaiyum's corrupt and vicious rule ran only on propaganda and its collapse has greatly increased the Muslim Leaguers' influence. But the situation there got spoilt, because in Qaiyum's place, greater power has emerged—the formidable Red Shirts. We can never win over Abdul Ghaffar Khan nor trust him. It would have been advantageous not to have released the Red Shirts unconditionally. They should have

been hemmed in with restrictions. Some people mistakenly give more political importance to Dr. Khan Sahib than to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. But shortly they will realize their folly. If the two brothers stay together, they will have a united strength. If they are separated, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan will retain his position, whereas Dr. Khan Sahib will pass into eclipse because individually he has no position. A change should be brought about immediately in the Frontier situation. We should give full co-operation to Rashid so that he will be encouraged to ignore the Red Shirts and organize the old Muslim Leaguers. In this way the widespread influence of the Red Shirts all over the province after their release will be ended, and this work should be entrusted to Qurban Ali Khan, who can effectively do it. He was made the Governor of the Frontier for this purpose. Abdul Ghaffar Khan should be totally ignored. Our parleys with him, will enhance his political influence and eclipse whatever influence we have, because none of us can equal him in political acumen. Whatever psychological advantage once we had, is now lost by us.'

"The reason for repeatedly keeping me in jail was to stop me from campaigning against the one unit.

"On page 23 the document says: 'The best thing for the Punjab is to keep mute at this juncture. The friends of the Punjab should be made to understand that they should commit no mistake because the present leadership rests in the Punjab and it will be more effective when the influential and educated people of the Punjab will be at the helm of affairs in the Centre as well as in Lahore. The Muslim League leaders in Baluchistan will certainly support us to some extent and the Shahi Jirga throughout its existence has never displeased any authority. When we get the full control of West Pakistan the only leader in Bengal with whom we can come to a settlement over one unit will be Suhrawardy. Either he will openly support us or will remain neutral.'

" 'It is necessary for us to keep in contact with the influential man in Sind and the Frontier for starting political work there. Some persons will have to be bribed with the ministerial and diplomatic posts. Otherwise, they will oppose the one unit in fear of endangering their careers. In the assemblies too it will be necessary to get the one-unit proposal passed. The Muslim League also will pass the one-unit proposal . . .

" 'Similarly, we should bring Baluchistan, Bahawalpur and the other states under our control. We should not solely depend upon the Deputy-Commissioners, but win over people who have political influence.'

"The document, on page 24, stresses: 'It is said that an alternative arrangement can also replace the one unit. For example, it is suggested that the territories and states should be first amalgamated into bigger

regions: Karachi and parts of Baluchistan should be amalgamated with Sind, some parts of Baluchistan should integrate with the North-West Frontier Province, and Bahawalpur should be merged with the Punjab. To contain the Frontier Province, the Punjab and Sind should later on be amalgamated. Some people think that this will be an easier solution. It will not be so easy for us to persuade Bahawalpur and Baluchistan to merge themselves with the bigger units, but they can be persuaded to merge with West Pakistan. If we launch upon this alternative scheme, instead of one unit there will be three units in West Pakistan, and this is no gain. There is no sense in having three or two units, because it is not a solution to the complicated constitutional problem of Pakistan. This way we will achieve nothing but will establish Pakhtunistan with our own hands.

" 'As soon as the West Pakistan leadership gets the one-unit scheme approved, they should at once take power in their own hands and start negotiations with the people of Bengal, especially, with Suhrawardy. Suhrawardy is ambitious. He will be ready to negotiate with us and we will tell him that the Centre will reserve only four subjects and there will be two autonomous provinces, namely, Bengal and West Pakistan. There will be parity at the Centre in representation also. Our bargain, indeed, with Suhrawardy is not so costly. We should come to a settlement with him immediately after his return from Europe and before he leaves for East Pakistan.'

"The perusal of these extracts makes it very clear as to who was the architect of this one-unit scheme and what was the motive behind it. It was claimed that the formation of one unit will create a common brotherhood between the people of different provinces, and unity and solidarity will prevail. But on reading the extracts it becomes obvious that they were not forming the one unit with this motive and they are not in favour of adopting the ways of love, affection and brotherhood, but force, intrigue, deceit, bribery and other foul means, to achieve their end. That is why hatred is generated instead of love, disunity instead of unity, and distrust instead of mutual trust.

"The third thing they had claimed was that the formation of one-unit plan would reduce the expenses and the savings be used for the welfare of the people. But this too is a lie. I had cautioned Parliament that the conditions were not favourable for the formation of one unit now, but if they sincerely wanted to save, they should form three units instead of one unworkable unit. And for the sake of the Punjabi brethren I was prepared even for having two units, and thus save for the present ten crores instead of twenty crores, which they claimed could be saved by forming one unit. But Mr. Mohammed Ali, the then Finance Minister,



Blitz

People awaiting his arrival in Kabul, December 1964

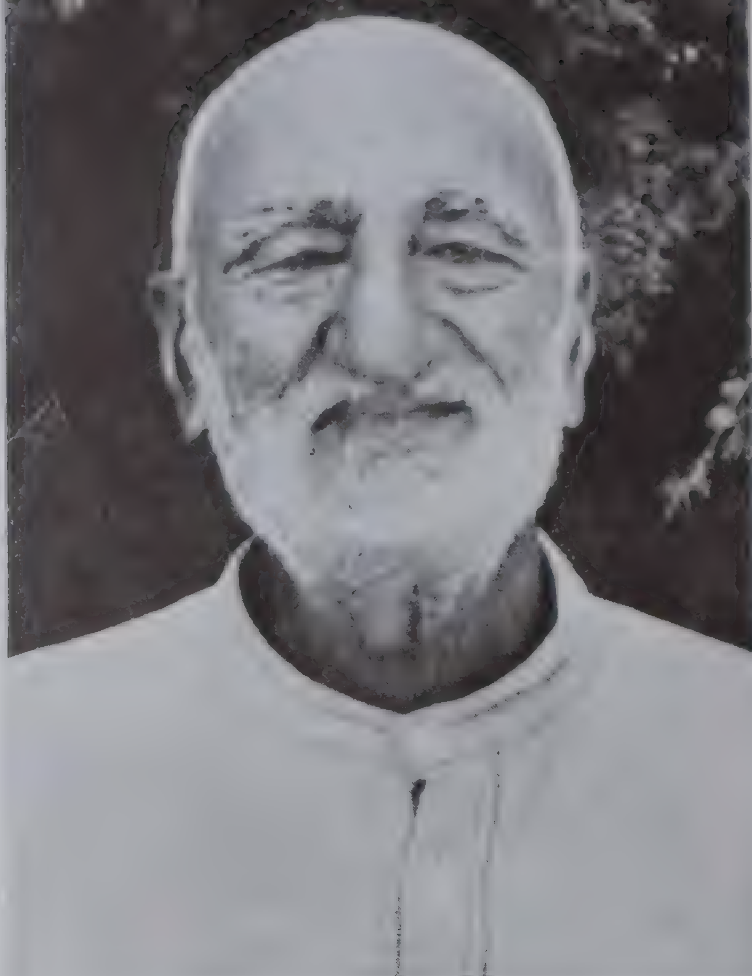
With members of the Afghan Government on his arrival







Addressing Pakhtunistan Day meeting, 1965



Aged 75

Convalescing in Kabul



told me that either there will be one unit or things will remain as they are. There we parted without any further discussion.

"The people have found out that instead of reduction in the expenses, there is an increase of crores of rupees. I remember now another thing. When we were having discussion on the one-unit plan and zonal federation, the Punjab leaders proposed that after the amalgamation with the smaller provinces the ratio of the representation should be 65 to 35 between the Punjab and the rest. And this ratio should apply not only to the membership of the assembly and ministry, but also to the services, trade and other professions. I rejected this proposal, because I saw in it the political, economic, cultural and social loss for the Pakhtuns. It appears that they had won over such colleagues among the Pakhtuns who were indifferent to the ruination of their people.

"They also claimed that the formation of the one unit would result in the improvement in administration. But when the local administrative set-up in the smaller provinces could not be improved, how would it be possible to run efficiently the administration of a large province spreading from Chitral to Karachi? The responsible people in the country and Government admit that since the formation of one unit the administration has deteriorated and the people are greatly inconvenienced.

"The experience of two and a half years proves that the one unit has neither achieved solidarity or brotherhood among us, nor has it led to any reduction in expenses or any improvement in the administration. It is a mystery to me why they are clinging fast to the donkey's tail, getting involved in a plan that does not benefit but harms the country. There is no more justification for continuing the unworkable one unit. The West Pakistan Assembly has adopted a resolution for undoing it at once by 306 votes in the house of 310. Hardly four members dared to oppose the resolution.

"They say that as the one unit has now been formed, it should not be undone because it will endanger the prestige of the Punjab. But Bengal does not want one unit, nor does Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier. The architects of the scheme want to stick to it out of self-interest and they are thrusting it on the people.

"The purpose behind the formation of one unit and also the pitfalls therein for the Pakhtuns must by now be obvious to all. As citizens of a democratic country it was our duty to convey to the Government the sentiments of the people and, therefore, we requested them to decide the issue with the consent of the people. We were told that the peoples' representatives were present in the assembly and, therefore, it was not necessary to consult the people directly. On the basis of this logic they got the bill passed in the assembly and enacted it as law in the name of

democracy. In spite of provocation we continued to struggle constitutionally and after two years of sad experience the members of the same assembly came round to our view and were convinced that the one unit was a grave mistake and should be undone at once. The assembly met and unanimously passed a resolution against the one unit. The democratic way was to undo the one unit, but the selfish leaders did not do it. The coercion used to form one unit, is being continued to maintain it. Under these circumstances the question arises as to how such vital issues concerning the country and the community are to be decided? And the issues involving the life and death of the country and the community are not only political but economic, social and cultural. In the democratic countries there are two ways for getting the national and community demands accepted—the one way is constitutional, and the other, the way of agitation. But during these eleven years we have seen that even the few democratic rights given to the people by the British have been snatched away by the rulers of Pakistan under one pretext or the other. The result is that no election has been held all these years. When the constitutional and legal methods to solve such vital issues are denied to the people, the only way left to them is that of struggle.

"Some people might think that it is our own government—Islamic and democratic. If it were really so, it should have solved the people's difficulties. Had it been democratic, then it should have respected the verdict of the assembly. Islam is a lofty ideal. If ours were an Islamic state, there should have been Islamic law: adultery, drinking, usury, immorality, wrong-doings, bribery, oppression and excesses should have disappeared. Islam does not permit a Musalman to suppress the rights of another Musalman and to submit to any suppression. Suppression of the others' rights is the greatest sin according to Islam. To those who stress that it is a democratic and Islamic country, I say that the country belongs to us all and we all are Muslims. I ask them, under the prevailing conditions, when we want to establish Islamic society, what is the duty of the people and especially of the learned men?

"In conclusion, I want to request the Government respectfully that they should not deprive the people of their democratic and legal rights and compel them to adopt other ways and means to assert their fundamental and human rights. When India and Pakistan achieved their independence, the Hindus formed their government in India and the Muslims in Pakistan. When the Hindus took over the government, first of all they fully compensated the people who had fought for the freedom of the country and undergone imprisonment and many other sufferings, by giving them rewards, lands and high posts, etc. And here under this government of Musalmans, those who had fought the Britishers for the

freedom of the country and had undergone imprisonment, miseries and sacrifices, have been put behind the bars, their houses have been looted and they are made to suffer in many other ways. It is regrettable that among us there is no spirit of fraternity as it exists among the Hindus.

"If, God willing, the Pakhtuns tighten their belts and stick to their resolve and get rid of selfishness, they will soon become masters of their own land. And as soon as they assume the authority, they will first of all fully compensate the people who had undergone great sacrifices for the freedom of the country. This is our Islamic duty."

On September 13th, 1958 Abdul Ghaffar was arrested at Quetta for defying the District Magistrate's order banning his entry into Baluchistan. The following day, the West Pakistan Chief Minister ordered the district authorities to remove him to Peshawar and to release him there. Talking to pressmen at the Lahore railway station, while he was being taken under the police escort from Quetta to Peshawar, Abdul Ghaffar said that President Iskander Mirza and West Pakistan Chief Minister, Mr. M. A. Quizalbash, had thrown to the wind an undertaking they had given him to amend the Pakistan constitution to enable dismemberment of West Pakistan after the coming general elections. He boldly accused the Pakistan Government of fomenting trouble between the Punjabis and the Pathans on the question of one unit to further postpone the general elections. "It will, however, be my endeavour to foil the Government tactics," he declared.

On October 11, 1958 Abdul Ghaffar, Maulana Bhashani and eight prominent leaders of East Pakistan were arrested. Under the Pakistan Safety Act, Abdul Ghaffar was arrested at the residence of Ghani, in a village in the Charsadda tahsil. Abdus Samad Khan was also arrested and sentenced to fourteen years' rigorous imprisonment.

These arrests took place within a week of the *coup d'etat* by General Iskander Mirza, the President, and General Ayub Khan, the Defence Minister. Martial Law was proclaimed all over Pakistan. After being sworn on the morning of October 27, 1958 as Prime Minister and having thus taken an oath to abide by the orders of the President, General Ayub Khan posed for a television interview along with Iskander Mirza in the evening. They laughed and joked. A couple of hours later, Ayub Khan peremptorily told Iskander Mirza to quit his post. Iskander Mirza and his wife were sent to Quetta and interned in the Circuit House. General Ayub Khan assumed powers of the President of Pakistan and appointed himself as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. He further proclaimed that the country would have a presidential type of cabinet, and accordingly, the post of Prime Minister was abolished. To consolidate his position as a dictator, General Ayub Khan retired all his best

comrades. They were allowed to retain their military ranks but were cut off from the armed forces. While retiring his friends, General Ayub Khan promoted himself to the position of Field-Marshal. The regime relied on the apparatus of military courts to award sentences up to the death penalty, for a variety of acts committed by the opposition, and summary courts at the magisterial level were empowered to give sentences up to a year in jail and fifteen lashes. The regular courts were precluded from reviewing such cases. There were uprisings in the Frontier Province and Baluchistan and shooting of men by the military administration.

One of the major decisions taken by the martial law regime was the transfer of the capital from Karachi to Rawalpindi. While the President advocated Rawalpindi as headquarters of Pakistan on the grounds of climate, in fact, he established a new capital there in order to keep his grip on the army of which he was the Supreme Commander-in-Chief in addition to his being the Defence Minister and the Head of the State. Making Rawalpindi the capital had also given to the Punjabis a great advantage over others in politics and business.

President Ayub Khan promulgated the Public Offices Disqualification Order and supplemented it by the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order to eliminate the former political leaders from seeking election till 1966. As most of the elder politicians were quite old, it was anticipated that either they would be dead by then or become infirm.

On April 4, 1959 Abdul Ghaffar was released from detention "somewhere in Pakistan". A press note announcing the Government's decision said that Abdul Ghaffar was released "on consideration of his age and indifferent health" and "trusts that he would no longer indulge in the activities prejudicial to the solidarity and security of Pakistan." He was first confined to the Haripur jail in the Hazara district and was later removed to Lahore under heavy police guard to enable him to appear in the High Court, where his appeal against the conviction last year on the charges of sedition was dismissed.

After his release, Abdul Ghaffar went to Utmanzai. A special tribunal appointed to purge unwanted politicians from public life served notice on him to state why should he not be disqualified on the ground that he had been detained at various periods for subversive activities. In his reply, Abdul Ghaffar neither denied nor disputed the orders of detention passed against him. He was consequently disqualified from being a member of any elective body until the end of 1966.

Abdul Ghaffar started his tour of the Frontier Province and spoke in villages and towns against the restrictive orders. Speaking in a mosque in the Bannu district in March 1961, he said:

"Today I will remind you of a few sayings and beliefs of our Prophet.

When he was asked to define a Musalman, the Prophet had said that a Musalman is one who did not hurt another Musalman. If we had followed the teachings of our Prophet, our lives would have been worthy and contented.

"The Prophet had also declared that if his followers concerned themselves mainly with riches and luxury then for them both the worlds—the world here and the world hereafter—would be completely ruined. For a trivial temptation we sell our religion and our community. Our present plight is the result of our greed for money. The Prophet told us that love for and service to our community and nation is an integral part of our faith. Contrary to this, we are inimical to our own people and indulge in petty rivalries.

"Islam means action. Fasting, offering prayers and turning the beads is not Islam. If Islam was not another name for action and deeds, our Prophet would not have undergone such severe hardships and tests.

"God has given us this heavenly country with many hidden treasures, but none among us has been benefited by them. You are unmindful of the fact that not you but the others are benefiting from your country's resources. The result is that you are starving and roaming from place to place. If you can live in your country and live peacefully and unitedly, you can make your country prosperous and both your worlds will become beautiful. In the Koran, God has mentioned that He does not punish people because of their lack of faith. If that was not so, America, Soviet Russia and Europe would have been destroyed long ago. They are rising higher and higher. God punishes and destroys those who are tyrannical, who are disunited and who are ungrateful to Him. God was so kind to you that He relieved you from the yoke of slavery of the British. When we were striving to throw out the British rule, our present lords did not even think that was possible. Many rich, well-to-do Khans, landlords and religious leaders used to consider freedom fighters as mad people. They thought that we were striking against a mountain—could anyone shake a mountain? They could never imagine that the British would leave and their empire would disappear without bloodshed. But God relieved us from the rule of the biggest power in the world."

A few days later, while he was touring the southern districts, Abdul Ghaffar was arrested in Dera Ismail Khan on April 12, 1961, under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance. The charge was that he had been indulging in anti-state activities, "including the spreading of disaffection towards the Government, causing a feeling of despondency and alarm among the public and creating hatred between various sections of the people". First, Abdul Ghaffar was detained at Paniala and then was removed to the Hyderabad jail in Sind.

His detention was followed by the arrests of a few hundreds of his co-workers in the Frontier. Addressing a press conference in Rawalpindi, President Ayub Khan began with the remark: "Abdul Ghaffar Khan wanted the Frontier area to become a part of India. Having failed in this venture, he demanded a separate province in Pakistan, where he wanted to be the king. Later, he wanted to make this Frontier region a part of Afghanistan." He ended by saying that the people who were not reasonable in their demands, would be severely dealt with.

Abdul Ghaffar's detention period was extended every six months. A demand for his release was made in December 1962 by Amnesty International, a non-political organization campaigning for the release of all political prisoners in all countries. It said in a statement: "Non-violence has its martyrs. One of them, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, has been chosen by the Amnesty International as the 'Prisoner of the Year'. His example symbolizes the suffering of upwards a million people all over the world who are in prison for their conscience." Stressing that Abdul Ghaffar had been in jail almost continuously since 1948 for leading a campaign for rights of the Pakhtuns, the statement added: "Despite appeals, the old man still lies in jail."

Abdul Wali Khan revealed in May 1963 that the Pakhtun followers of his father, numbering some three thousand, were rotting in the detention camps and their properties worth over forty-two crores of rupees had been confiscated.

In July 1963 the Speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly ruled out an adjournment motion seeking to discuss the continued detention of Abdul Ghaffar, lying ill in the Lahore jail. The Home Minister quoting the latest medical report stated: "Abdul Ghaffar Khan enjoys normal health, taking his meals regularly. He has some chronic foot trouble and this is being attended to by specialists."

A fortnight later, an official announcement said that Abdul Ghaffar Khan, "who has been seriously ill for some time past", accompanied by a medical officer of his choice, was being transferred to Multan "at his own request". The announcement added that he had declined the services of any doctor who was not of his choice and went on a hunger strike for three days.

Wali Khan who met his father in December 1963, complained to the Home Minister that his father, now lodged in Lahore jail, "is in solitary confinement and is forced to cook his own meals." He stressed that his father had been very ill recently as a result of wrong medicine administered to him. He demanded decent, human treatment to his father.

Abdul Ghaffar was released on January 30, 1964 from the Haripur Central Jail when his health had deteriorated alarmingly. The Pakistan

authorities did not wish to face the odium of his death in prison. They put him under house arrest. Perhaps, they thought, he would not survive. He was not allowed even to meet the people in his village and was forbidden from making any public statement.

Commenting on the martial law regime of President Ayub Khan, Abdul Ghaffar writes:

"I have witnessed two martial law regimes. When the Britishers declared the martial law in 1919, on one side they were engaged in a war with Afghanistan and, on the other, they were faced with non-violent revolt all over India. They were faced with a difficult situation, and yet their martial law continued hardly for four months. When the martial law was declared in Pakistan in 1950, the situation in the country was peaceful and its frontiers were not threatened by any outside power. But all of a sudden the martial law was declared in Pakistan in order to impose by force the rule of a few individuals and deprive the masses of their democratic rights and to obstruct the general elections. This martial law was continued for four years.

"The martial law of the Britishers had generated an urge among the people to throw off the foreign rule. As a result the struggle for freedom intensified and ultimately the Britishers had to quit. The martial law of Pakistan also has strengthened the feeling among the people that the Government of Pakistan is not a representative government, but it is imposed upon them by force, oppression and fraud. It is necessary to throw them out so that the country may achieve true freedom. As the Britishers were unsuccessful in maintaining their rule by force for ever, so also the rulers of Pakistan will vanish one day like the Britishers.

"It is necessary to have the right faith and right path, and the right people should come forward to follow that path so that they become the crusaders of their faith or creed. The masses are sure to follow them to reach the objective."

Faith Is A Battle

1964-5

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU was greatly worried over the failing health and continued torture of his dear friend, Abdul Ghaffar. He regretted that he could see no light to help his old comrade. "Any step that we may take might add to the difficulties of Badshah Khan." On May 27, 1964 Jawaharlal Nehru died. In a telegram to his daughter, Indira Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar wrote from his village: "Deeply grieved to learn of the passing away of one of the greatest sons of the soil, a noble freedom fighter, who put into practice Gandhiji's ideals of love and peace on earth. Pray Almighty his noble ideals will continue to inspire the people of India. I wish that I could be with you by your side in this national bereavement."

Abdul Ghaffar confined to his village home was ailing. In September 1964 he was at last allowed to go to Great Britain for treatment. During his two months' stay there, Sir Olaf Caroe, the former Governor of the Frontier Province, visited him and took him home for rest. Sir Olaf treated him with great courtesy and genuine admiration. Addressing the Friends of Peace Society, Abdul Ghaffar said: "It is good that I came to your country, because in the past I did not have a good opinion about you. The Britishers, whom I met in India, were different. Thank God, I came here. The misunderstanding about you has vanished."

In London, Abdul Ghaffar received Indira Gandhi with affection, as if she was his daughter. In a letter to Pyarelal, Abdul Ghaffar said:

"Perhaps, you have forgotten us, but we have not forgotten you. Man in his happiness forgets his friends, but those who are in distress cannot. In our adversity, we think of you. If Mahatmaji had been alive, he would certainly have remembered us and come to our help. It is our misfortune that he is no more and the rest have forgotten us.

"You might be knowing that I have come to England for treatment. Since my arrival here my health has improved somewhat. But the cold weather has set in and the doctor says that a cold climate is not good for me. He has advised me to go to America and pass the winter in a milder climate. I have applied to our High Commissioner for a passport. If I get it, I shall proceed to America. Remember me in your prayers and pray for me that God may restore me to health for the service of His creatures."

He gave up his plans to pay a visit the United States because he was

examined by the U.S. Embassy "like a school boy" and was called there several times. "After the frustrating delay of several weeks I have now given up my plan to go to California." One reason for the American reluctance to give visa was the fact that "the gentleman who guaranteed the former Red Shirt leader's expenses is one Dr. Aurangzeb Shah, the founder of the Pakhtunistan movement in the United States." And it was further said: "The U. S. has enough trouble with Pakistan over arms aid to India and over China, as it is, without this Pakhtunistan business further complicating the situation."

The Pakistan authorities prevented the American Government from granting him visa to go to America for treatment. The Pakistan Embassy in London had opposed his going to Afghanistan also. He could, Abdul Ghaffar was told, go to Beirut, Teheran or Cairo, where the Pakistan authorities would make all arrangements for his treatment—anywhere except Afghanistan or India. When he reached Cairo in November, he found that the Pakistan Government had instructed their Ambassador to ask the Afghan Embassy to refuse him visa, but it was too late, the Afghanistan Government had already agreed to his going there.

When Abdul Ghaffar reached Kabul in December 1964, he was received at the aerodrome by the Afghan Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues. He was greeted by thousands of Afghans with the slogans, "Fakhr-e-Afghan Zindabad" and "Pakhtunistan Zindabad". He told the press that he had come to Afghanistan only for medical aid.

In a letter to Pyarelal, he wrote from Kabul: "Nothing worse can befall us than what we have already suffered and continue to suffer. Considerations of personal harm have never weighed with me. What saddens me is that while we shrank from no sacrifice for the sake of India's independence, the Congress on attaining it, forsook us. They gave themselves up to enjoyment, while we were left to suffer alone. We are still dubbed 'Hindus' . . . This was unbecoming of the Congress . . . We are oppressed. To help the oppressed is the essence of religion in its true sense."

"My dear Badshah Khan," wrote Vinoba Bhave on April 5, 1965, "I am distressed beyond words to have to admit that in our freedom fight a great injustice had been done to you and you have been practically let down by our friends. But you have borne it all with great patience and fortitude. Your example has been a source of inspiration to all of us. . . . These days a conviction has been growing within me that in this age of nuclear weapons politics, so called, are quite outdated, and problems, national and international, can only be solved by resort to spirituality, '*ruhaniat*', and I know that you are essentially a man of God with deep spiritual convictions, rather than a man of politics. You have always

been a staunch believer in non-violence and self-suffering. May be after putting you to so much trial, God intends to use you as an instrument in solving world problems! *Bashshiris sabireen.*" In reply, Abdul Ghaffar wrote from Kabul a month later:

"I was deeply touched to receive your affectionate letter of 5th April 1965. It is extremely fortifying to receive a note of encouragement from a source so worthy as yours, to a person who is fighting a losing battle not only with his adversaries but his own rank and file who have become so desperately disgusted with the tyrannical government of Pakistan. They are losing confidence in the creed of non-violence, which I had taken so much pains to inculcate in their hearts. Their argument is that with the Britishers who were a civilized nation, brought up in the democratic traditions of their homeland, non-violence could have its efficacy, but not with Pakistanis, who do not attach much importance to moral values.

"In the last eighteen years, since Pakistan came into being, I have been, as you know, behind bars for fifteen years—mostly in solitary confinement—with taunts and insults from those who were my wardens. This was not only my fate. All those who were Khudai Khidmatgars—and you know that they formed an absolute majority in our land—have undergone similar treatment, rather worse than mine. Their property is confiscated and their children and families are now destitute, because their bread-earners are in prison. If you add to the list the savage bombardment of Baluchistan and the tribal area, then the picture becomes very grim indeed. Baluchistan and Bajaur are even now the operational ground for the Pakistan army, where they have encircled vast areas and where the military operations are still in progress. I will not mention the casual shootings, now and then, of the peaceful citizens of my country. There is none to report these brutalities to the outside world. Our newspapers have been banned, our organization is declared unlawful, our centre has been demolished and we have been deprived of all human rights, even of those given to us by the alien British Government. The Government and people of Pakistan label us as Hindus whenever we open our mouth or move in the public. I tried to serve the people of Pakistan, but they do not allow me to do so. Because of my past association with the Congress, they do not trust me for anything. We are heading towards a catastrophe.

"Vinobaji, this is being done to me when I have not moved a finger against Pakistan nor done anything to start a movement, campaign or action against any government in that country, though much they may deserve it. I do not know what to do now. Kindly think over it and give me your advice which I value most in the whole world. Should I leave

my people in that condition? It is not possible. But to do anything has become impossible.

"My comrades in India who are now in Government, cannot realize my difficulties because we have become a different class now. They do not see anything bad in it. I am now a man of a different world to them, though it is for the faithful and honest association of these friends that my nation and myself have been reduced to this miserable plight. I do not know what their conscience says, but if I had been in their place, I would have acted otherwise to secure justice for them, for the sake of humanity, if nothing else. Sorry to have bothered you."

In July 1965 the Indian delegation returning from the Helsinki Peace Conference called on Abdul Ghaffar in Kabul. There were about eighty of them, including several M.P.'s, social workers and Congressmen. Akbar Ali Khan, Member of the Rajya Sabha, in a speech introducing the delegation said they all remembered him and were grateful to him for the part he had played in the freedom struggle. They were still trying to follow the path indicated by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. They brought him their love and reverence, which were shared by the whole of India.

Abdul Ghaffar told them that he appreciated their profession of love and affection for him and thanked them for it, but he could not help saying that while he and his Khudai Khidmatgars had stopped at no sacrifice so that India might be free, India after attaining independence had forgotten them and had thrown them to the wolves. Had it ever occurred to them, he asked, that while they in India were enjoying the fruits of independence, those who had fought shoulder to shoulder with them for its attainment had been deprived of theirs? They had been oppressed and tyrannized over. But, as the old saying went, if a traveller having lost his way in the morning, at last, returns home at evening, though late, he is not considered lost. Could he entertain that expectation of India and his old Congress colleagues? he asked.

In the last week of July, Pyarelal went to Kabul at the behest of Vinoba to meet Abdul Ghaffar and convey to him sympathy and affectionate regards. Pyarelal's revealing account of Badshah Khan's thinking and doing is as follows:

"It was evening when I reached Dar-ul Aman where Badshah Khan resides as a state guest. The authorities have put at his disposal a lovely villa, roomy and well furnished, with every modern convenience. There are a couple of attendants and a motor-car with a driver.

"He was sitting in a chair on a lawn in front of his residence, surrounded by a score of visitors. Bare-headed, with graying hair, and in sandals, he was wearing his flowing blue-dyed shirt and pyjamas as of

yore. After the visitors had left, we repaired inside and listened to the news on the radio and then had a frugal dinner. Although sumptuous meals, becoming Afghan hospitality, are daily prepared for him, he refuses to accept them as he does not wish to be a burden to the public treasury. After supper we had nearly an hour's stroll, exchanging reminiscences of olden days.

"For all his seventy-five years he seemed, indeed, extraordinarily fit. He walked with a firm, steady step. Speech, eyesight and hearing were unimpaired and memory fairly sharp. The countenance bore marks of intense suffering but the eyes beamed deep compassion, and an air of kindliness surrounded him. Even more striking was the complete absence of rancour or bitterness on his part after all that he and his people had suffered as a result of India's partition and as a result of their subsequent neglect by us. It speaks volumes for his large-heartedness that he retains his regard and affection for his friends, Congress colleagues and the people of India, unaffected by all that he has been through.

"Since Badshah Khan's arrival in Afghanistan the Pakistani Ambassador has been trying to lure him back to Pakistan, promising him all sorts of things. But he has seen through their deceit, he says. He is not going to walk into their trap. He is not going back to Pakistan where he is convinced only lingering death in prison awaits him.

"His prison treatment seems to have done permanent damage to his constitution. His heart is weak. The return of the venous blood from the extremities is retarded. As a result he frequently gets a feeling of numbness in his legs. Appetite is poor and he suffers from lack of sleep at night. He was being looked after by a Czechoslovakian doctor. Twice during my stay Khan Saheb had to go to hospital for examination and treatment. He has been prescribed therapeutic massage for his legs.

"He gets up early in the morning at half-past four, has a cup of very light tea at six and breakfast at half-past seven, consisting of tea and a couple of eggs and a slice or two of toasted bread. His lunch consists of a plate of boiled vegetables, *nan*, a little curd and fruit. Dinner is a replica of the lunch. Before retiring he has a cup of milk. He has regular morning and evening walks. From nine to mid-day he is surrounded by visitors and again from half-past three till late in the evening. They include members of the Government, students, tribal chiefs, and divines.

"Often he dines out with friends, co-workers or local men of importance. These dinner gatherings, comprising from a dozen to a few score or more guests and members of the family, take more or less the same place in Pakhtun society as public meetings amongst us. There is singing of patriotic songs to the accompaniment of instruments. Questions related to politics, tribal affairs, social reform or a new movement to be

launched are discussed. At the end women in purdah come for a *ziyarat* of Badshah Khan after the guests have retired. One of Badshah Khan's hosts at a dinner, where I accompanied him, was an Afridi chief, commanding a following of 26,000 men in arms.

"He repeated several times during my stay with him that they could have had their Pakhtunistan and anything for the Pakhtuns if they had only accepted the partition plan. Before partition, at the time of partition and also after partition, the British Government, Jinnah and the members of the Pakistan Government, including Liaquat Ali, Ghulam Mohammed and Iskander Mirza, had in turn made tempting offers to him, if only he would compromise with his cherished convictions in respect of nationalism and repudiate his association with the Indian National Congress and the national struggle, and join hands with the Muslim League. He had refused. At the time of partition, Gandhiji had told him that independent India would not fail to come to their help if they were oppressed. That promise had not been kept. Gandhiji would never have let this happen if he had lived. India owed it to them and to Gandhiji to make *kafara*, expiation, for it.

"He had a long and bitter tale to narrate of the oppression and the persecution that the Khudai Khidmatgars have suffered. The Pakhtuns were denied the right of free association and free speech. The Khudai Khidmatgar organization had been outlawed. Pakhtu was being suppressed and Urdu was being forcibly imposed upon them. They were not allowed to bring out a Pakhtu journal, which even the British had not dared to ban, or to carry on publicity of any kind. The Pakhtuns were being crushed and demoralized and corrupted by bribery and repression and by assiduous spread of opium and charas-smoking among them by the Pakistani Government. 'Not only Pakhtuns but the people of Sind, Baluchistan, and East Pakistan are oppressed and had come to detest Pakistan's yoke, which to them meant only domination and exploitation by the Punjabi Muslims.'

"I asked him what his immediate plans were. He said he was going to re-start the Khudai Khidmatgar movement with the consent and co-operation of the Afghan Government.

"I asked him whether he was sure that the Afghan Government's conception of Pakhtunistan was the same as his or merely they wanted a revision of the Durand Line. Alluding to the fact that it was the Pathans who had got Nadir Shah, the father of the present ruler, his throne, it was simply a question of *noblesse oblige*. 'We went to their aid when they were in distress. We expect them to come to ours, now that we are in distress.'

"I asked him what was the secret of his method which he had followed

with such spectacular success in turning the fiercest warriors on earth into matchless soldiers of non-violence. He replied it consisted simply of education through direct, personal touch. Most of the time he lived in the villages like and with the people in their homes. 'We taught them elementary things of daily life: how to keep clean and healthy and at peace with one another, how to eradicate evil customs and usages, etc. We told the Khudai Khidmatgars that they should serve God only by serving His creatures.'

"What were the difficulties he was encountering in organizing his present movement? I asked. He replied that to begin with vested interests were a bit afraid of democracy and, therefore, of him. This fear had systematically been worked up by interested elements. But confidence was fast returning. 'We tell the Khans: "We don't wish that you should cease to be Khans, but that others too, should be helped to become Khans. You are not afraid of that?" "Of course not," they reply.'

" 'The people are overwhelmingly with us,' he continued. 'You should have seen boys, girls, men and women weighing down house-roofs and even tree-tops, when I went on tour to Herat. I tell the people when they come to me, "You have come for *didar*, to kiss my hand and offer *shukrana*, because you have been told that thereby you then obtain *sawab*. But all this is false teaching, inculcated by those who wish to exploit your credulity for personal gains. I want none of these things. I wish only to serve you, to teach you to become Khudai Khidmatgars. God cannot be served otherwise than through the service of His creatures." '

"I wished to know if the movement that he had launched was evoking popular response in the same measure as the Khudai Khidmatgar movement in the N.-W. Frontier Province or whether there was difference. He said that there was a difference. The response he was now getting was greater. In his earlier movement the people were corrupted and demoralized by the British rule. They were labouring under a slave mentality. The people he was now working with were unsophisticated and, relatively speaking, uncorrupted. They had grown up in independence. That made his task easier. Their response was spontaneous.

"To my further question whether imparting discipline to them would not be a slow and arduous process, he answered that being fighters they had learnt discipline already. All that he had to do was to give it a non-violent turn.

"Giving expression to a lurking fear in my mind I asked him whether if India espoused his cause, would it not harm him personally, would it not ruin whatever chance there was of a reconciliation between him and the Pakistan Government? He replied, so far as he personally was concerned, he had burnt his boats. As for the prospect of a reconciliation

with Pakistan, it was practically nil. He had tried every means, he said. The conclusion that had been forced upon him was that Pakistan is incorrigible. By way of illustration he said that even if India were to offer not one but half a dozen Kashmirs, India would find that peace would not be established with Pakistan. His faith had been completely shattered. He wished to have nothing whatsoever to do with Pakistan. He would do or die—either achieve Pakhtunistan or die fighting for it.

"Are the masses ready? Is the prospect hopeful? I asked. 'They were not only ready,' he replied, 'but impatient.' Their response was greater and more spontaneous than anything he had ever experienced under the British rule. I asked him whether some of the old constructive workers, whom he had known before, could be of help in his work. 'Of course, they will be of immense help,' he replied, but he felt that there was not time enough for this. The situation that confronted him called for immediate action. He had to act with whatever resources he had in readiness. If he hesitated, the Pakhtuns might get out of hand and do something desperate. To avert such a tragedy he must take a calculated risk. He could not allow his people to be crushed, demoralized and reduced to abject submission for ever. They had not fought the British to exchange one slavery for another.

"I asked Badshah Khan if he would come to India. He answered, 'Yes, but not for sight-seeing.' He would come if the cause for which alone he lives was advanced thereby—if India made the Pakhtun issue her own to redeem Gandhiji's pledge. In answer to my question whether he could not plan a visit to India to woo public opinion in his favour, he replied that would depend on the Government of India's attitude. Finally, to my question whether he could not think of extending his Khudai Khidmatgar movement to India as Gandhiji had once envisaged, he replied that he would certainly consider it if people and the Government of India so desired. But that could only be after his movement had become firmly established among the Pakhtuns.

"If India and Afghanistan co-operated with them fully, the Badshah felt, the Pakhtunistan question could be settled without any outside help and without fighting. I asked him in what way could India help. He answered: 'By putting upon those concerned all the moral, economic and diplomatic pressure that India was capable of. India was in honour bound by virtue of the solemn pledge that Gandhiji had given them at the time of partition to do for them all that she could do in an issue of vital concern to herself.'

"As I took leave of Badshah Khan the feeling uppermost in my mind was one of wonder and amazement at the unconquerable spirit of this man of God, who, having watched from behind the prison-bars with a

bleeding heart that the things he had given his life to, broken, had now in the evening of his life, set about undeterred by the overwhelming odds arrayed against him, to build them up with outworn tools."

The Pakhtuns complain that they never joined Pakistan but were pushed into it. In 1946 a pledge was given to them by Lord Wavell, in an address delivered in Landi Kotal: "On behalf of His Majesty's Government I give you an assurance that the coming political changes in India shall not affect your right to freedom." No Pakhtun jirga sat in any Constituent Assembly or signed any instrument of accession and no leader of the Pakhtun tribals acted on their people's behalf. They were just grabbed by Pakistan. They were even repeatedly bombed to compel them to submit. But they would not bend.

Inaugurating the Pakhtunistan Day on August 31, 1965 at the Pakhtunistan Square in Kabul, Mohammed Ashgar, the Mayor, said that every year the Afghan Government celebrates the Pakhtunistan Day and will continue to support the Pakhtun brethren till they achieve their independence. The large gathering present on the occasion included the entire Afghan Cabinet and Abdul Ghaffar. After the speech Pakhtunistan flag was hoisted by the Mayor. Later the entire gathering proceeded to the Ghazi Stadium where the Pakhtunistan flag was seen side by side with the Afghan flag.

At the stadium, Badshah Khan was introduced as one of the greatest leaders of Asia, who has fought against imperialism and colonialism. Abdul Ghaffar thanked His Majesty, the Afghan Government and the nation for their continued support to their struggle for the independence of Pakhtuns. In his impassioned speech to a gathering of 50,000 people, Abdul Ghaffar said that the Pakhtuns form one nation. Due to their struggle and sacrifices independence was achieved and the British were expelled and Pakistan was created. "We want to be friendly with Pakistan," he said. He not only condemned Pakistan for denying Pakhtuns their rights, but for turning them into mercenaries, making them fight their own brethren in Baluchistan, Waziristan and Kashmir.

In a stirring appeal to Pakhtuns he urged them to forget their feuds and be united so that Pakistan would be compelled to give them their rights. He stressed that Pakistan thrived on propaganda that it was an Islamic state and that its President Ayub Khan was a Pathan. He refused to accept Pakistan as an Islamic state, since it did not follow the principles of Islam, according to which not even brothers could usurp each others' rights. "Islam stresses equality and equal rights. Pakhtuns are demanding only the right to build their homes."

"Ayub Khan has regard for me," he said. "He calls me uncle. But he is not for the prosperity of Pakhtunistan. What sort of a Pathan is

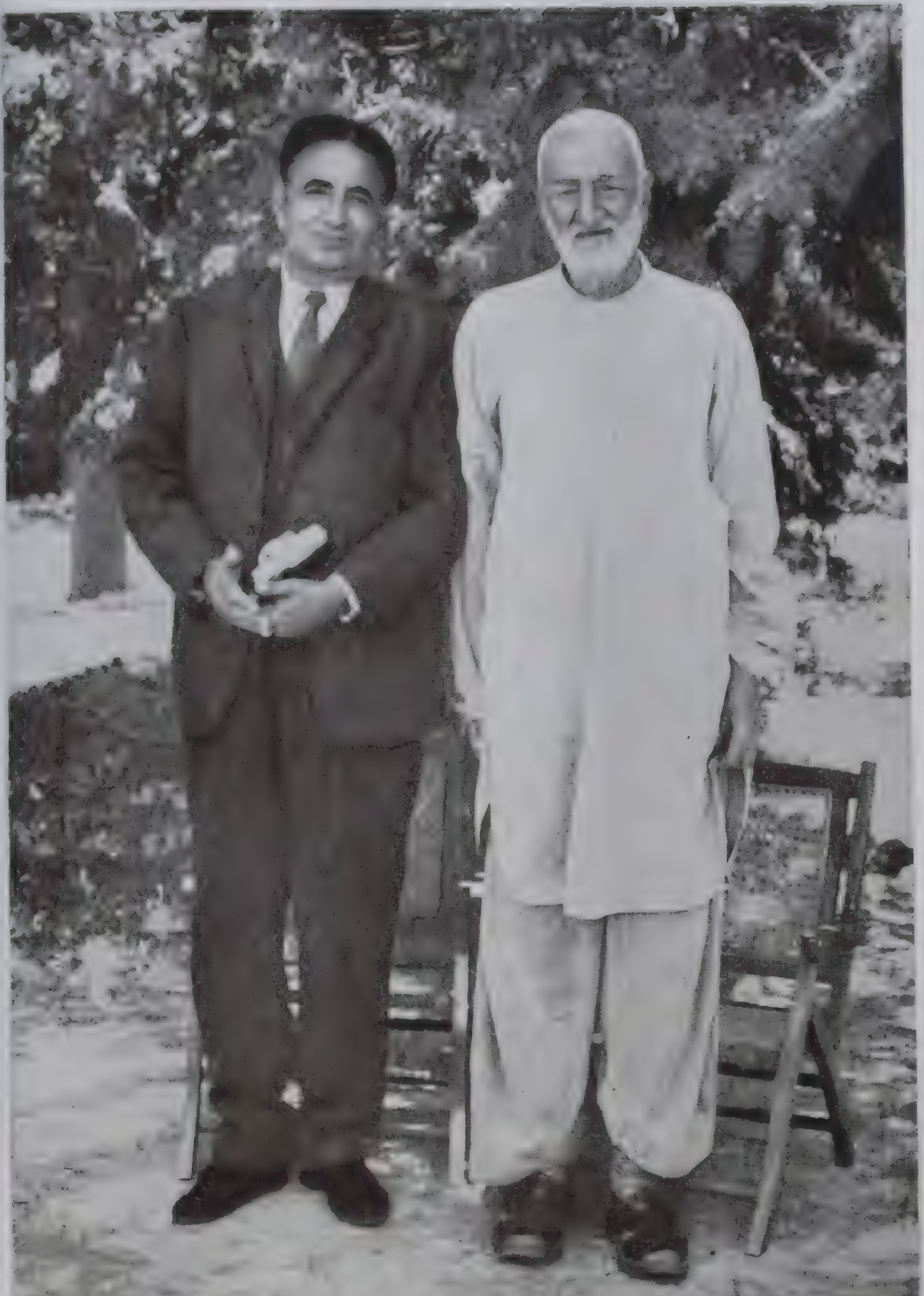


Photo : Pyarelal

With his son, Ghani, Kabul, 1965



Photo: P. N. Sharma

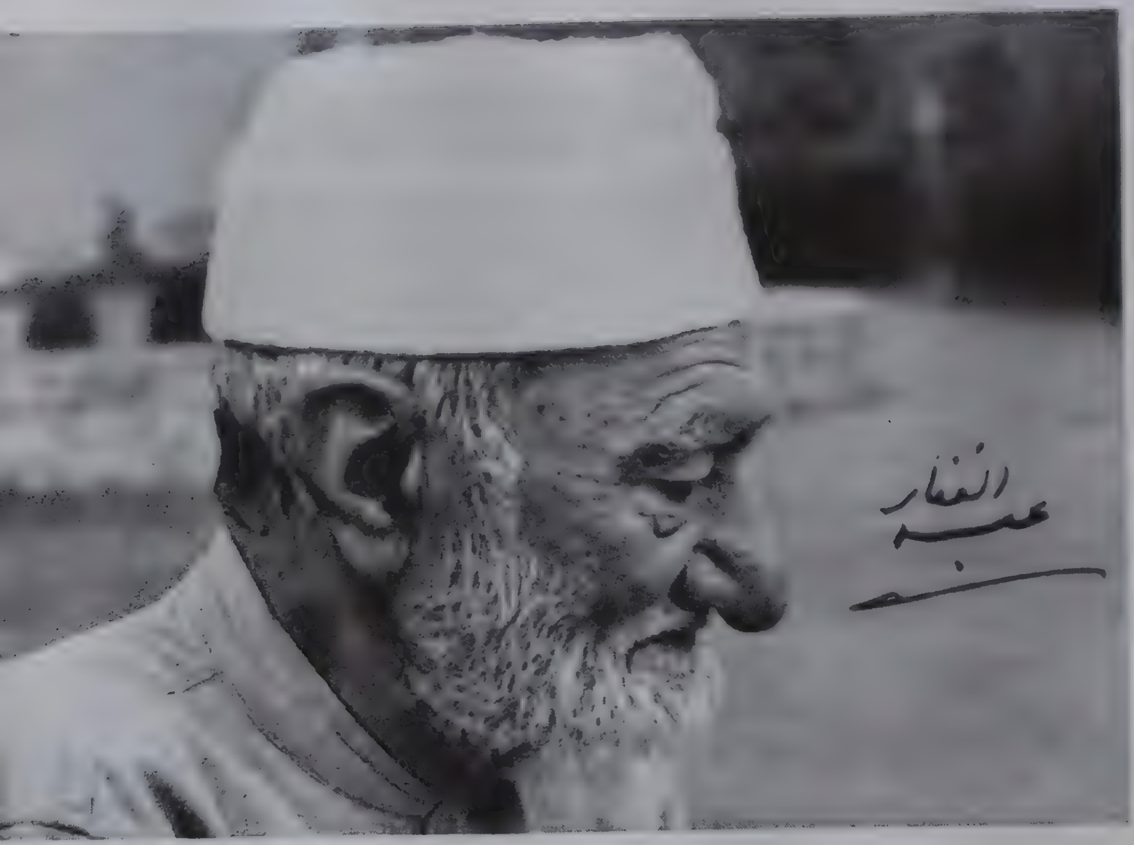
With Dr. Zakir Husain, 1966





With the Pakhtuns





Jalal Abad
Afghanistan
17.12.66

My dear Tendulkar

I enclosed herewith please find a copy of the rough draft of introduction on the Pukhtoon nation. This draft has been prepared in a very short time.

Please go through it and polish it. The purpose behind this draft is to introduce the Pukhtoon Nation to the outside world, so that the people of the world may know that the Pukhtoon Nation is not like the one introduced & shown to the people of the world by the British writers

I hope you will find it helpful to the work you have undertaken. I am alright, I wish you the best of your health.

Yours

Abdul Ghaffar

Ayub Khan when he is bringing ruin upon the Pathans? In Pakistan the Pathans are not trusted. Pathan generals have been sacked from the army and Pathan civilians are being externed from their own areas so that they can keep no contact with their own people. They have been denuded of their properties, they are being bought with petty bribes. The top positions in Pakistan are held by the Punjabis. The economic conditions of the Pakhtuns continue to be miserable."

Concluding he said that Pakhtuns will continue their struggle until their aim is achieved. "This Pakhtun land is our mother. An outsider has come and has put his foot on the mother's veil. Now it is up to you to remove this foot or leave your mother to his mercy."

Badshah Khan's earnest message to the Pakhtuns is: "I have pledged to God that I shall serve my beloved country and community. I pray to the Almighty that I should become a martyr in my endeavour. Join me in my mission. Take courage in both hands and fight to achieve the objective. Even the Prophet individually could not succeed. Then how can I? The fate of a country or community cannot rest in the hands of one person but will depend on the sacrifice and service of all."

About the Pakhtuns in the Settled Districts and the Tribal Areas, Abdul Ghaffar says:

"I treasure the love and the patriotic feelings of the tribes towards me and I shall do so to the last days of my life. The British Government as well as the Pakistan Government have never permitted us to have contact with the tribal brethren and the dear neighbours of the Agencies and the States, or to stand by them in their hardships and sorrows. The real motive of the British Government and now of the Pakistan Government is to keep us divided into small units and different tribes and to prevent us thereby from forming a joint brotherhood.

"Thousands of people were murdered by the ancient tyrants. And as a result of British and Pakistani policies, lakhs of Pakhtuns who could have been a strong nation in Asia and served the cause of humanity, have been divided and devastated, gradually erased from the map of the world and wiped out. My crusade today is against this injustice. What crimes have the gentle Pakhtuns committed that they should be erased from the pages of history, deprived of their land and through serfdom pushed to their doom!

"I want to knit the divided tribes of the Pakhtuns, spread out from Baluchistan to Chitral, into one community, one brotherhood, so that they can share their sorrows and sufferings and can play a vital role in serving humanity. We have been painted black in the eyes of the world by aliens. The doors are shut upon us, none is allowed to reach us, and we have been presented as a collection of uncivilized, wild tribes. This

vicious propaganda hurts all human hearts. The courage of our tribal brothers is described as wildness, passion for freedom as lawlessness, their proverbial hospitality as an irrepressible urge to entertain guests by begging and borrowing and pillaging. During all these dark and evil days for centuries, spreading from the Mogul reign to British rule and Pakistani regime, these helpless people have been subjected to tyranny. They are destined to live in arid lands that lie on the hem of the hills. Life is hard in these barren tracts. The return from the unfertile fields is meagre. Lack of proper facilities, transport and communication, makes trade unrequiting. Opportunity for developing their artistic talents and business propensities is denied to them. They seldom enjoy a long spell of peaceful existence, needed for industrial development. For centuries they have known no peace. They have been repeatedly ravaged by bombardment, war and massacre. Their territory is a war zone, a training-ground for imperialist powers. They have no schools and hospitals. Like untended, wild daisies, they bloom and fade away in mountain ridges. All necessities of life are denied to them: they have no bread, no water, no fertile plots to cultivate, no trade centres or bazars. I wonder what the apathetic world expects of them! The world should have lavished love and sympathy on these handsome, healthy, youthful girls and boys; instead, man-eaters have been let loose on them and injury has been added to insult. I long to save these gentle, brave, proud, patriotic and chivalrous Pakhtuns from the tyranny of aliens and create for them a free world, where they can grow in peace, comfort and happiness.

"I want to kiss the earth heaped on the ruins of their homes devastated by brutal people. With my own hands I want to wash their blood-stained clothes. I want to sweep their lanes and humble mud huts. Before the eyes of the world I want them to stand on their legs with head erect, and then want to throw this challenge: 'Show me another decent, gentle and cultured race like them!'

Abdul Ghaffar is a man of faith. Faith is a battle. The faithful fights to the end. He needs no weapon.

Glossary

Ahimsa, non-violence.
Allah-O-Akbar, God is great.
Ashram, hermitage; a place for study and discipline of life.
Azan, a call to Muslim prayer.

Babu, clerk; bourgeois; an idler enjoying lucrative post.
Badal or badla, revenge.
Badshah, king.
Bait-ul-mal, public treasury.
Bashshiris Sabireen, give good tidings to the steadfast.
Bhajan, hymn, devotional song.
Bhandar, store.
Bhat, bard.

Chacha, uncle.
Chaddar, a sheet worn as a wrap.
Chakki, grinding-stone.
Charkha, spinning wheel.
Chilla, meditation for forty days.
Chilam, earthen pipe.
Crore, ten millions.

Darshan, glimpse.
Dar-ul-ulum, seat of learning.
Dhanush takli, a spinning instrument plied with a bow.
Didar, vision, sight.
Durbar, assembly.

Fatwa, an authoritative interpretation of Islamic law.
Firangi, European.

Ghani, oil-press.
Ghilma, attractive boy.
Goonda, hooligan.

Haj, pilgrimage to Mecca.
Hamsaya, neighbour.
Haram, forbidden, prohibited.
Hartal, suspension of all activities in protest, strike.
Hijrat, departure from one's country and friends.

Himsa, violence.
Houri, celestial damsel.
Hujra, a village guest-house or club.

Imam, leader for conducting prayers in mosque.
Inquilab, revolution.

Jagir, assignment of land or land revenue.
Jai, hail, victory.
Jamadar, a native officer in the army or police.
Jamat, organization.
Jehad, holy war.
Ji, an affix added to names denoting respect, *e.g.*, Gandhiji.
Jirga, assembly of elders.
Juma namaz, Friday congregational prayer.

Kafir, infidel.
Khan, chieftain.
Kharas, grinding-stone.
Khassedar, a tribal policeman.
Khel, clan.
Khilafat, Caliphate, suzerainty of Caliph.
Kirpan, sword.
Kufar fatwa, declaring one a kafir.

Lashkar, tribal array, army.

Madrasa, a school.
Mal-i-ghanimat, booty.
Malik, a headman.
Mantra, a sacred formula or incantation.
Maqbarra, tomb.
Mashir, leader.
Maulana, a Muslim divine.
Maulud Sharif, the Prophet's birthday celebration.
Maulvi, a person learned in Islamic law.
Mela, fair.
Melmastia, hospitality.
Miras, inheritance.
Muajibs, salaries, pensions, rewards.
Mujadid, reformer.
Mujahideen, Islamic warriors.
Muhajarin, exile.
Mulla, priest.

Namaz, Muslim prayer.
Nan, home-made wheaten bread.
Niwar, broad tape woven across bedstead.

Pak, pure.
Pakhtunwali, the Pakhtun code.
Pir, a holy man.
Purdah, veil, custom of keeping women in seclusion under a veil.
Purdanashin, a woman observing purdah.
Pipal, a tree sacred to the Hindus.

Rawaj, custom.
Roza, a fast.

Sadhana, discipline, dedication.
Salam alaikum, peace be on you.
Salar, chief.
Sangathan, organization.
Sawab, religious merit.
Shariat, Islamic law.
Shuddhi, re-conversion.
Shukrana, offering.
Siparah, one of the thirty equal parts of the Koran.
Sitar, stringed musical instrument.
Surah, one of the 114 chapters of the Koran.
Surnai, a wind instrument.
Swadeshi, indigenous product.
Swaraj, self-rule; self-government.

Tahsil, taluk, a revenue subdivision of a district.
Tappa, a small tract of country.
Thana, a police station.
Toba, God forbid!

Ulema, Muslim divines.

Vanar Sena, children's volunteer corps.

Zalim hakumat, oppressive rule.
Zenana, harem, a veiled part of house in which women are secluded.
Ziarat, a Muslim shrine.
Zindabad, long live.
Zulum, oppression, injustice.

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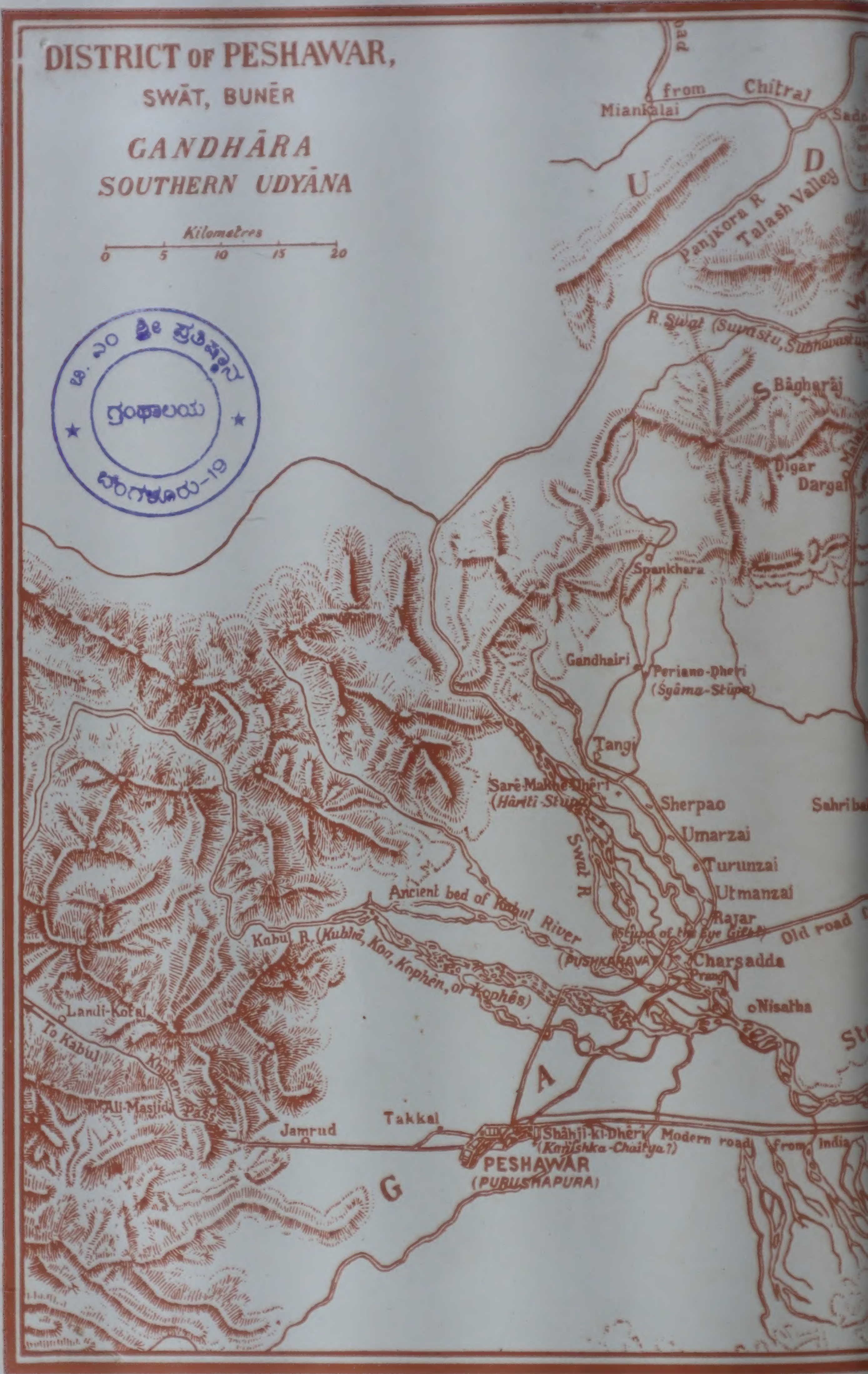
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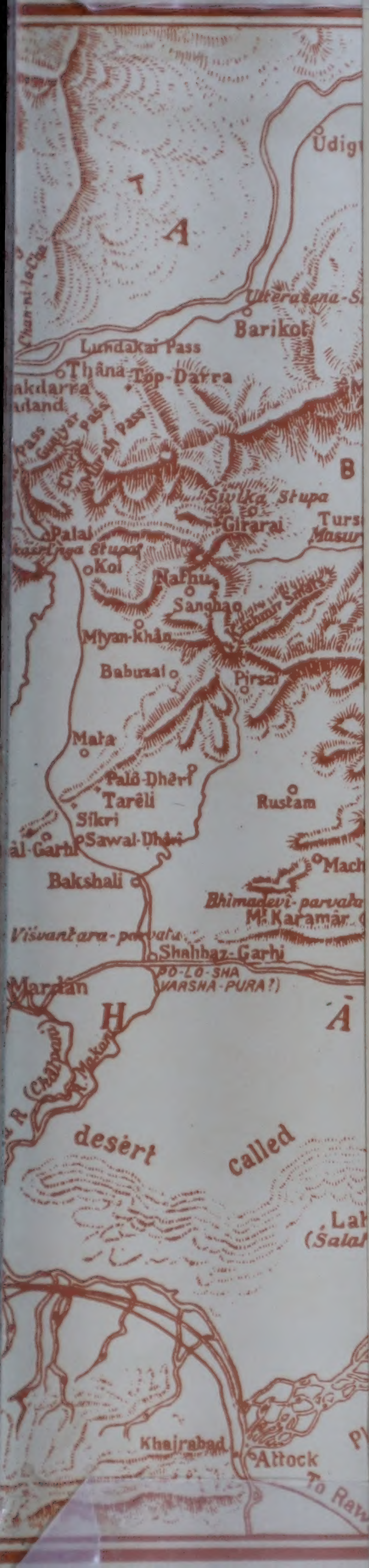
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Index



DISTRICT OF PESHAWAR,
SWĀT, BUNĒR
GANDHĀRA
SOUTHERN UDYĀNA
Kilometres
0 5 10 15 20
from Chitral
Miankalai
U
D
Panjkora R
Talash Valley
R. Swat (Suvastu, Subhavastu)
S
Bāgheraj
Digar
Dargai
Spankhara
Gandhairi
Periano-Dheri
(Śyāma-Stūpa)
Tangi
Sare-Makhe-Dheri
(Hāriti-Stūpa)
Swat R
Sherpao
Umarzai
Turunzai
Utmanzai
Rajar
(Stūpa of the Eye Gifts)
Charsadda
Prang
Nisatha
Old road
Ancient bed of Kabul River
Kabul R. (Kubhā, Koa, Kophēn, or Kophēs)
(PUSHKARAVATI)
Landi-Kotal
To Kabul
Khyber Pass
Ali-Masjid
Jamrud
Takkal
Shāhji-ki-Dheri
(Kanishka-Chaitya?)
Modern road from India
PESHAWAR
(PURUSHAPURA)
A
G



MAN in his happiness forgets his friends, but those who are in distress cannot. In our adversity we think of you. If Mahatmaji had been alive, he would certainly have remembered us and come to our help. It is our misfortune that he is no more and the rest have forgotten us.

My comrades in India cannot realize my difficulties because we have become a different class now. They do not see anything bad in it. I am now a man of different world to them, though it is for the faithful and honest association of these friends that my nation and myself have been reduced to this miserable plight. I do not know what their conscience says but if I had been in their place, I would have acted otherwise to secure justice for them for the sake of humanity if nothing else.

Abdul Ghaffar

TRUTH is the very foundation of your life, and I am sure that you radiate its influence all around you. We have realized this too that all our own efforts are every day being frustrated for lack of this devotion to truth.

I have not the slightest doubt that you have been able to stimulate the heart of our folk here with some of that great force of character which is your own. Pray accept the grateful homage of all of us. This is our earnest prayer that you be long spared to help this land, sick unto death, toward vigorous health and truth.

Rabindranath Tagore

HE is not only Fakhr-e-Afghan, but it is right to call him Fakhr-e-Hind. There is hardly any other person, excepting Mahatma Gandhi, whose work is so widespread and he is truly the symbol of India's heroism and courage. It is a grievous tragedy that the man who helped greatly in bringing freedom to India and Pakistan and whom any nation would have delighted to honour should become a victim of the very independence that his labours helped to bring. He has been for more than a generation a symbol of truth and fearlessness.

Jawaharlal Nehru

I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief. His inner agony wrings my heart. Verily Badshah Khan is a fakir. Independence will come, but the brave Pathan will lose his. But Badshah is a man of God. For such a person there can be no defeat. He has patience, faith and non-violence joined in true humility. I am sure he will not shrink from any sacrifice or suffering, but will die serving the Pathans with his last breath. He lives only for that.

M K Gandhi